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CRICKET HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

THE YOUNG CRICKETER

From the water-colour by W. H. Hunt (1790–1864)

CRICKET HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

BY

F. S. ASHLEY-COOPER

Hail Cricket! glorious, manly British Game!
First of all Sports! be first alike in Fame!
JAMES LOVE, 1744

LONDON
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TO

MY WIFE

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CRICKET HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

CHAPTER I

THREE GREAT PLAYERS

EARLY in the season of 1926 there occurred two events which served to recall the very prominent parts played in the game by George Parr and F. R. Spofforth, for the centenary of the former's birth fell on May 22nd, and the latter died at his home in Surrey a few days later.

Although over fifty years have passed since Parr took part in his last match of any public note, his name is still familiar to everyone who takes any interest in the game, as for years he was acknowledged without a superior as a batsman. In Nottinghamshire cricket annals especially he occupies a most prominent position, but, besides assisting the county regularly for about a quarter of a century, he also took part in all the greatest matches of his time. He led Notts, the Players and England, and took teams to America in 1859, and to Australia and New Zealand in 1863–4, both of which returned undefeated. He was thoroughly acquainted with every fibre of the game, and was always a chivalrous opponent. Respecting the last-mentioned point, E. M. Grace furnished an interesting and illuminating instance. Just after "The Coroner" had pulled a ball from John Jackson for four in a match at Lord's, Parr, whilst the ball was being recovered, went up to him from point and said softly: "You had better look out,

sir, for old Jack is almost sure to send the next ball straight at your body." "E. M.," when relating the incident, used to add: "Knowing what to expect, I hit his next delivery for another four!" Think what one will, it was a kindly act on Parr's part to warn a young cricketer at the expense of his best bowler. Both Daft and Alfred Shaw declared that the old "Lion of the North" was the best captain under whom they ever played, which was praise indeed coming from two such excellent judges.

George Parr's fame, however, rests on his batting. He could hit well all round the wicket, but it was as a leg-hitter that he was unrivalled. He himself declared, and doubtless believed, that he never made such a stroke off a ball on the wicket; but there can be no doubt that at times he did. In those days it was considered "not cricket" to send a straight ball to leg, and sometimes when Parr made one of his favourite strokes he would, in consequence, be greeted with shouts of protest from the fielding side, and even from the spectators! Of his contemporaries, no bowler held more emphatic views on that point than Diver, of Cambridge. Once, whilst the ball was being retrieved from such a hit, he strode down the wicket and asked the striker in angry tones: "Do you know where that ball pitched?" The batsman, misunderstanding the drift of the remark (or pretending to do so), replied: "In the hedge, I think."

The certainty with which Parr made his famous leg-hits was quite remarkable. It was useless to try to set the field to stop them, for he could steer the ball through almost any number of men—when he did not hit it over their heads. Generally he did not seem to hit the ball with very great force, but it travelled hard and fast as a rule—the result of perfect timing.

Such strokes on his part were often more like mowing than genuine hitting, but were beautiful to see.

Parr stood at the wicket with his left knee bent and his back arched, and, when preparing to receive the ball, held his bat slanting so much that his hands were often battered and bruised in consequence. This was especially the case when he played his historic innings of 130 against Surrey at the Oval in 1859—the greatest personal triumph he ever enjoyed. When he was out on that occasion, the spectators swarmed over the ground, cheering as they ran, and formed a narrow passage from the wicket to the pavilion down which Parr hobbled with his peculiar limp, and with his bat in one hand and his straw hat in the other. Upon arriving at the pavilion, he was at once presented with a sum of money which had been collected, in a cocoa-nut shell, for him among the spectators. The batsman always declared that it was the proudest day of his life.

George Parr was a kind-hearted man of a retiring disposition, though some people who did not know him well mistook his shyness for surliness. He had his foibles, of course—most people have—and if, when conducting the affairs of the All-England Eleven he at times spoke strongly, it must be remembered that there were probably good causes. He was, however, a man who would never willingly have caused a moment's pain or irritation to anyone. Once, at Stoke, a gentleman who subsequently became President of the M.C.C. went up to him and said: "I hope, Parr, you will remember me being at Harrow whilst you were coaching there." George at once replied: "Of course, sir; of course. Those were happy days, weren't they?" A few minutes later, however, Parr inquired of a friend: "Who was that?" and, when

told, said: "I did not know him from a crow; but he will go home much happier thinking I did."

He was a man of much quiet humour, and many stories are told respecting his quaint observations. Thus, he used to say to young cricketers: "When you play in a match, be sure not to forget to pay a little attention to the umpire. First of all inquire after his health, then say what a good player his father was, and, finally, present him with a brace of birds or rabbits. This will give you confidence, and you will probably do well."

Parr was an excellent shot, and in shooting, as in cricket, was a true sportsman. He never took a shot that he thought belonged to a neighbour, and he would often turn to the next gun and shout, "Your shot, sir!" He preferred to miss than to wound, for nothing caused him more pain than the cry of a maimed animal. Perhaps one personal reminiscence on this point may be allowed. During a shoot at Shelford Manor a hare was wounded, and endeavoured to run on its hind legs whilst crying like a child. It was more than Parr could stand, and, hastily passing over his gun to his cartridge carrier, he put his hands over his ears and called out to the keeper: "For heaven's sake, loose that dog!" When the hare was killed, he added: "Poor as I am, I would not have wounded anything like that for a five-pound note."

Those whose pleasure and privilege it was to know George Parr—he died in June 1891—will always recall him with something very like affection. Dick Daft referred to him as "a man under whose banner I am proud to have fought, for a more honest and straightforward cricketer never took hold of a bat."

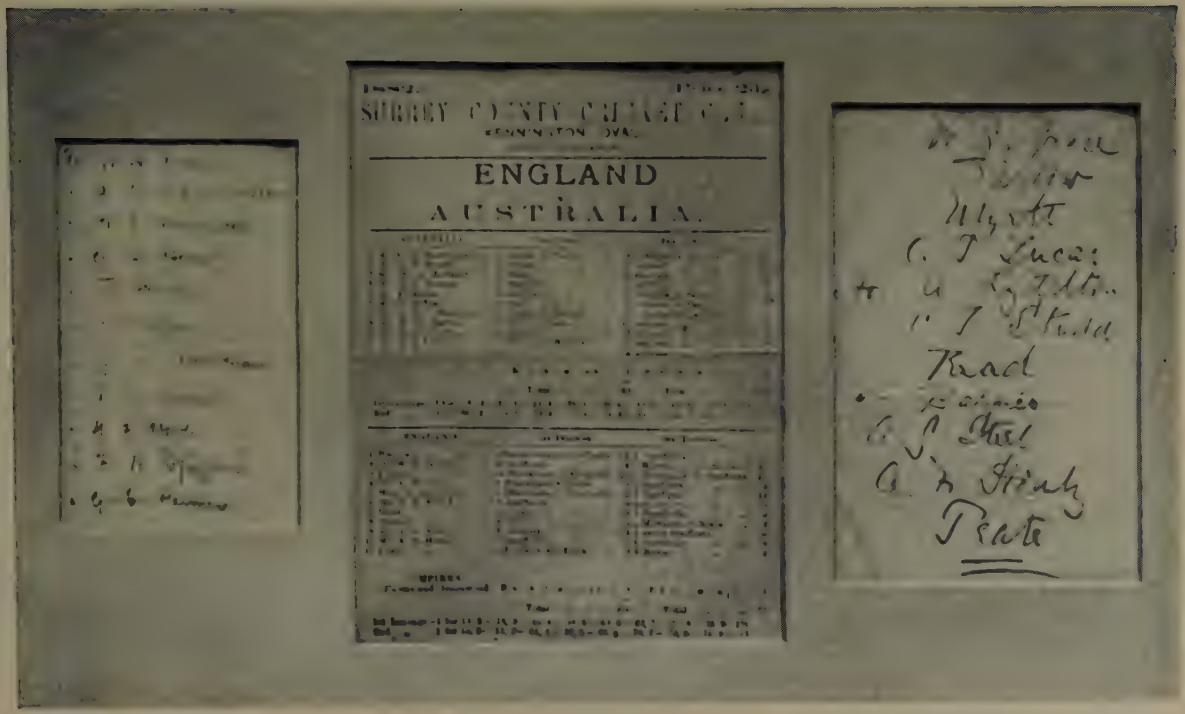
It would be an easy matter to write many pages about "The Demon," for he occupied a place in cricket

history which is unique. It was as much to his undoubted genius as to any other cause that Australia proved her right to meet England on even terms, and it is not too much to say that he reached the place among bowlers that "W. G." did amongst batsmen. Although he had played, and with success, in good-class cricket before he ever came to England, his great days may be said to date from 1878, when he was seen in this country for the first time. That was for the pioneer Australian team which, under the captaincy of D. W. Gregory, arrived unheralded and almost unnoticed. Defeat by an innings and 14 runs at the hands of Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge in their opening match caused no comment—it was much what had been expected by those who had troubled to think at all about the matter; but, exactly a week later, at Lord's, they disposed of a strong M.C.C. side for 33 and 19, and won, in a single day, by nine wickets, thirty-one men actually being dismissed for 105 runs in four and a half hours. Boyle took nine wickets for 17 runs; Spofforth, who did the hat trick, ten for 20; and, although the former had slightly the better average, it was "The Demon" who made the greater impression. It was a wonderful success on the part of the visitors, one which electrified the whole cricketing world, and one which caused May 27, 1878, to mark the commencement of a new epoch in the history of the game. Until then Englishmen had quietly assumed that they were without rivals in a game they had made peculiarly their own, and their awakening was both rude and emphatic.

It was in such dramatic fashion that Spofforth gained recognition, and wherever he played that season crowds flocked to see him perform. He was then twenty-five years of age, and so presumably at about his best, and,

that being so, it was unfortunate that the side—it was the same with that of two years later—played so few eleven-aside matches. For the teams of 1878 and 1880, Spofforth's figures, even allowing for the many games in which he took part against odds, were altogether remarkable. For the former side he obtained 764 wickets at a cost of 6.08 runs each, and for the latter 763 for 5.49 apiece. These figures include his doings in the Colonies and (in 1878) in America.

"The Demon" himself has told how he developed his skill and attained such a state of excellence as caused him to be dreaded by the strongest opponents, whatever the conditions. As a small boy at Eglington College, Glebe Point, Sydney, he bowled fast underhand, and, when he saw the success with which George Tarrant, of Cambridge, met, he determined to be as fast a bowler as possible. In that resolve he persevered for some years, until, in fact, he saw Southerton and Alfred Shaw perform, when he decided, if possible, to combine the methods of all three men. It was a great undertaking, but Spofforth was ambitious, and, besides, was never a man to be daunted by any seeming difficulties. He persevered, and with what splendid results is known to all who have any acquaintance with cricket history. He was a tall, wiry man, 6 feet 3 inches in height, with a high delivery, good length, a deceptive break and a deadly yorker. Add to all this that he had wonderful command over the ball, and could vary his pace without any apparent change of action—he could be exceedingly fast—and it will readily be understood why many batsmen funked him. He was always most energetic, and he was the man before all others that one would have wished to have on one's side in an up-hill game. When endeavouring to pull off a match by his bowling he would brace every nerve to accom-



THE GREATEST TEST MATCH—KENNINGTON OVAL, 1882

Official Score Card with the Order of going in written by the two Captains—W. L. Murdoch and A. N. Hornby

plish the task, and in such circumstances one required an iron nerve to face him with any confidence, for even in his run up to the wicket he was intimidating. In that respect one cannot help recalling the most prominent part he played in Australia's memorable seven-runs victory at the Oval in 1882—England's first reverse in a Test on her own soil. Several of our greatest players were so unnerved that their teeth chattered whilst waiting their turn to go in. Spofforth never did anything greater, considering the importance of the occasion, than he did in that match, for he took seven wickets in each innings—fourteen altogether for 90 runs. Some good judges were inclined to rank C. T. B. Turner as his equal, but the general opinion seems to be that "The Demon" stood in a class apart. Both "W. G." and George Giffen, whose authority is entitled to all respect, held the latter view.

Apart altogether from his outstanding ability as a bowler, Spofforth was quite a useful man to have on one's side. He was a long-headed individual, and his advice on matters of policy was always valued. Like so many of his companions in some of the early Australian teams, he could throw the ball a great distance —he has been credited with 120 yards; he was, too, a safe catch and a plucky, hard-hitting bat. His best innings in a match of note was played in a Test in Melbourne in 1884–5, when, going in number eleven, he made the highest score for his side, and obtained 50 of the 64 runs which the last wicket added in fifty-five minutes.

It is much to be regretted that Spofforth never wrote his reminiscences, for he was a capital *raconteur*, and such a volume, dealing, as it would have done, with cricket for a period covering sixty years, would have been most interesting and valuable. The occasional

articles he penned were characteristic of the man—thoughtful and making clear in few words what he wished to impart. He was a man of considerable personal charm and with a decided sense of humour, and his death was felt very keenly by many.

Just as Spofforth ranks as the greatest bowler yet produced by Australia, so must Victor Trumper be regarded as the Commonwealth's most pronounced genius so far as batting is concerned.

Trumper's batting was *sui generis*, and, although he could play an orthodox game as successfully as anyone, it was his ability to make big scores when customary methods were unavailing that placed him above his fellows. His timing has never been excelled, and in the art of placing the ball he was unsurpassed. He always seemed to divine far quicker than most men the best way in which a ball should be played, and then brain, wrist and bat acted in perfect unison. At times he would apparently change his mind at the last moment—he was always very quick on his feet—but, even then, the resulting hit was, more often than not, pre-eminently a master-stroke. So many were his devices, in fact, and so pronounced his versatility, that, when at his best, even the greatest bowlers seemed to be at his mercy. At times it was useless for a captain to attempt to place the field for him, for his *répertoire* of strokes was remarkable and, as stated, his ability to place the ball was exceeded by none. His wonderful pulling was so successful because it was due to a combination of great confidence in himself and a marvellous eye.

In his prime he would often get a yorker to the square-leg boundary, and it was by no means unusual to see him cut a ball off the middle stump for four.

Some of his biggest hits, which sent the ball over the ring, were made without any apparent effort—the result of perfect timing and judgment. His swing was as graceful as that of Mr. F. G. J. Ford, and at times the length of his hits rivalled those of many of the greatest hitters among his contemporaries. It is no exaggeration to say that he was great under all conditions of weather and wicket and against all kinds of bowling.

When he visited England for the first time, as fourteenth man, with the Australian team of 1899, he did very well, scoring 135 not out in the Test match at Lord's and 300 not out *v.* Sussex at Hove; but during the tour of three years later he was even more successful. Then he obtained eleven hundreds—two in one match against Essex—and an aggregate of 2,570. Not once did he fail to score, and only Shrewsbury, who had far fewer innings and seven not-outs to help him, was higher in the averages. It was a very wet year, but apparently the conditions under which he played made little difference to him, for he scored well and readily throughout the tour. The exhibitions he gave were alone sufficient to make the season of 1902 memorable. Not since "W. G." was in his prime had any batsman met with such brilliant success. Well might "Felix" (Mr. Tom Horan) say that "then it was that the welkin rang with the tumult of sustained applause in recognition of his glorious play," for glorious his cricket certainly was, and Englishmen would not have been human had they failed to mark their deep appreciation. For him the season was one long triumphal progress, and those who were fortunate enough to witness his amazing brilliance will never be able to forget the unrivalled skill and resource he displayed. On sticky wickets he hit with freedom and scored well, often

whilst his companions were puddling about the crease, unable to make headway and seemingly content if they could keep up their wickets.

That he should have failed to repeat such wonderful doings on his subsequent visits to England was not surprising: in his greatest year he attained heights which may never be reached by any other player, and in that season alone he did sufficient to achieve cricket immortality. He was always to be feared on Australian wickets, but followers of the game in England were privileged to see him at his zenith. Much of his old brilliance, however, was apparently again in evidence in 1910–11, during the visit of the South Africans to Australia, but then he was not afforded so much scope for displaying his genius as on the ever-changing paced wickets of England almost a decade earlier, and, of course, he played far fewer innings. Mr. Guy Eden, in his *Bush Ballads and Other Verses*, included a tribute to him of which the following is a specimen verse:

> Oh! he's just a dandy batsman, he's a rajah, he's a toff,
> Widout any fancy feelin' for the "on" or for the "off."
> He just takes his bat, and thin, wid one apologetic cough,
> Sets to work to play the divil wid the bowlin'.

Trumper, who was always particularly neat in his attire, was the *beau ideal* of a cricketer, alike in build, temperament and skill. He possessed a charming personality, which caused him to be the most loved, as he was certainly the most gifted, of all Australian batsmen, and it must have been due largely to the fact that he was the most good-natured and popular of men that his testimonial match—New South Wales *v.* Rest of Australia at Sydney in 1912–13—produced almost £3,000. Notwithstanding his confidence in his

own ability, he was the most modest of men in the hour of triumph—not with a studied modesty (which is often the most objectionable form of egotism), but with a natural reserve, amounting almost to shyness, which won all hearts.

CHAPTER II

WINTER CRICKET

Your glasses fill, and, with three cheers,
We'll drink success to those
Who play at Cricket all year round,
In spite of frost and snow.
Old Poem, by H. B., a Mechanic.

So sang a bard—"All cricket poets are bards," says Mr. E. B. V. Christian—in celebration of a match on skates in Sheffield in February 1838. Such contests have been comparatively rare of late years, and the average cricketer, whose experience of the game has been gained during summer months only, can have but little idea of the varied delights to be found in cricket on the ice. He may extol the "glorious uncertainty" of the game as played under normal conditions and yet be an utter stranger to the many unexpected occurrences—often quaint, generally unpremeditated on the part of the chief actor, and invariably humorous—which are always a feature of ice cricket. If the chief asset of the game is its "glorious uncertainty," then winter cricket, when the wearing of skates is a *sine quâ non*, must be the most perfect of all pastimes.

On ice, whilst enjoying the play in a merry and joyous manner, one misses the rigour of the game which makes real cricket so delightful to the true enthusiast. Perhaps the most noticeable difference in this respect is the seeming impossibility of the fieldsmen to remain in the positions assigned to them. It is of little use for a bowler to station a man at mid-on or mid-off and then deliver a head ball—if he has

sufficient ability to keep his feet and Providence is kind—in order that a catch may be effected, for the probability is that when the batsman has made the stroke and the ball is spooned in the direction where the catch should be made the fieldsman will be found at least twenty yards from his pre-arranged position, either cutting a figure of eight backwards with his hands in his pockets—this only if he happens to be expert—or standing involuntarily on his head with legs and arms spread-eagled.

There are of course many other respects in which the two games differ. For instance, in summer when a player is dismissed the fieldsmen throw high catches to each other or recline luxuriously on the turf in the sunshine; in winter the player with the ball is always desperately anxious to rid himself of it, and, having done so, either goes for an excursion down the pond or flounders to the shore to partake of hot coffee or something equally comforting. Again, in summer a hit for more than six is quite the exception, whereas on the ice more remunerative strokes have often been chronicled, owing to the difficulty experienced by the fieldsman in picking up the ball before it has ceased rolling, and when at length he has the ball safe in his thick-gloved hand there is always the problem as to the manner in which he shall return it to the wicket. Generally he sits down in making the effort, and has the pleasure of seeing the ball go in a vastly different direction from what he intended. If he throws in over-arm at all quickly he is almost certain to fall heavily on a part of his anatomy already made tender by similar unpremeditated occurrences; if he sends it in underhand, his feet may as often as not be trusted to play him a trick at the critical moment, in which case he sits down with a bang, and a minute or two later

perhaps receives a stunning blow on the head from the ball, which in his well-meant endeavours he merely succeeded in hurling a few yards into the air immediately above him. In such circumstances sanity may desert him for a moment, during which he is as likely as not to throw his pipe instead of the ball from him. Such happenings, of course, give joy to the spectators and enable his comrades to give him all manner of advice in all kinds of voices, from deep bass to shrill treble, but always (to his way of thinking, at least) in unnecessarily loud tones.

When a cricketer plays on ice he is generally at sea—in a figurative sense, that is—and it is not long ere he has occasion to notice many curious things. If a bowler, for instance, he will find it advisable not to endeavour to take his usual run up to the wicket, for a little experience combined with a small amount of wisdom will convince him that the best thing to do is to stand as steadily as possible by the stumps, with kness pressed together and teeth clenched, and leave to the gods the course of the ball and the question whether he shall or shall not fall. Occasionally the novice will find, much to his surprise, that if he indulges in his usual preliminary run he himself will arrive at the batsman's wicket before the ball, which in such circumstances has an aggravating habit of trickling gently to one side of the pitch a few yards from the non-striker's ground. But the joy he experiences when the delivery is straight is as great as that which he derives from a leg-hit for six under normal conditions. Should the batsman hit the ball, the bowler is still happy, for it may (and probably will) be a matter of minutes ere it is again in his hands, and one of the axioms of cricket on the ice for the novice is: "When you find the ball in your possession get rid of it as

soon as convenient by any means in your power—by fair if possible, but by foul if necessary." Batsmen also find in the winter game weird delights to which they have always previously been strangers. In the first place it is far easier in theory than in practice to stand motionless on skates, and for the tyro to do so whilst making a good hit is to perform little less than a miracle. Furthermore, if there is an art in running between wickets on turf, the art in doing so on skates is even greater, and therefore more difficult of acquirement. In summer the batsmen just touch the popping crease with the tips of their bats and return without rendering themselves ridiculous; on the ice they skate yards past the wicket, stamp their feet, wave their arms, and appear to be trying to tie themselves in knots in their endeavours to turn and effect a second run.

There are still other respects in which the two styles of cricket differ. When a captain wins the toss in a match on the ice he is invariably advised to put the other side in, " as the wicket is so wet "—a joke enjoyed by so many generations of cricketers as to suggest that it dates back to the time when—

> Good St. Patrick did the hat-trick,
> And Nicodemus saved the follow-on.

The stumps are generally placed in a wooden block, which goes sailing merrily to leg, through the slips, or past the wicket-keeper when a batsman is bowled. Again, in summer months one generally puts on pads, etc., oneself. In winter one has the assistance of an individual, generally seedy in appearance, one of whose hands seems to be in a state of acute rheumatism, but is, in fact, voluntarily doubled up to act as a money-box.

In matches on the ice points arise for the consideration of the umpire on which the Committee of the M.C.C. have given no ruling in their official interpretation of the laws. A few years ago, for instance, in a ladies' game at Davos, a fair batswoman, in an endeavour to bring off a big hit, lost her balance and sat heavily on the ball, which, being a hollow rubber one, she "pancaked" absolutely flat. The question arose whether she could be out leg before, for it was not disputed that the ball, had its course not been impeded, would have hit the wicket. One is glad to be able to add that the acrobatic young lady was adjudged not out —by a mere man, who was perhaps anxious to see the feat accomplished again—but, of course, a new ball had to be provided in order that the game might be finished. Davos, by the way, is an ideal place for winter cricket, which is played there on a good-sized lake and amid beautiful surroundings. Boundaries are not recognized, and productive hits are consequently not uncommon. Major E. G. Wynyard, the old Hampshire batsman, has been credited with a stroke for twenty-three.

In reviewing briefly the chief matches of the many hundreds which have been played on ice, precedence should perhaps be accorded that which took place on the frozen Thames in 1814. During the severe frost of two months that year amusements of various kinds were held on the river, and the ice was strong enough to enable a dray of Messrs. Barclay and Perkins laden with the usual full barrels of porter to be drawn by three horses across it. A cricket match was arranged, but the crowd would not keep the field for it, and the ball when struck away was recovered with difficulty, "for the resistance of the ice caused it to bound so often as to become quite impracticable and unmanage-

able." Another game on the frozen Thames was played at Windsor in 1855.

Of more interest was the famous match at Harewood, in Yorkshire, on February 15, 1838, between Harewood and Stank, wherein 698 runs were made for fourteen wickets. The score is worthy of reproduction:

Harewood.		Stank.	
J. Wade, b Holdsworth ..	92	— Scott, b G. Wade ..	53
G. Labron, c Scott	76	J. Clarkson, b Barrett ..	11
— Thackray, b Killvington	13	— Holdsworth, not out ..	93
R. Mosey, b Killvington ..	0	— Shepherd, st Barrett ..	8
H. Barrett, b Scott	60	— White, touched ball ..	0
G. Wade, b Scott	72	G. Ambler, not out	26
— Wardman, b Scott ..	0		
J. Hardisty, b Killvington	0		
S. Baldwinson, not out..	84		
J. Nicholson, b Holdsworth	63		
J. D. Muschamp, b Killvington..	9		
Byes, etc.	17	Byes 16, w 3, nb 2 ..	21
Total	486	Total (four wickets)	212

Hugh Barrett made a hit for thirteen and obtained twenty-five runs off a six-ball over. Why White should have been given out "touched ball" is not recorded in *Scores and Biographies*; perhaps, like the young lady at Davos, he sat on it, or maybe it struck him and he retaliated. And here it may be mentioned that cricket on the ice appears to have been played to a far greater extent in Yorkshire than in any other county. The Sheffield lads especially were keen on the amusement, and their matches often attracted thousands of spectators. Frequently, through the generosity of the Duke of Devonshire, they were enabled to disport themselves on a lake at Chatsworth, and of a game they played there in 1848 it was recorded concerning the gutta-

percha balls used that "the frost had a tendency to make them hard, and very sharp hitting caused them to break." How partial Yorkshiremen were to such games was made apparent by an incident which occurred in a match at Sheffield in January 1826. During the course of the play one of the bats broke—a serious matter, as it could not be replaced; but, instead of abandoning their sport, the players overcame the difficulty by substituting a single-wicket game for the double wicket. In January 1837, when the town announced their willingness to play any provincial team on the ice with skates, a match between two picked nines took place on Little London Dam, Sheffield, and was described in verse by "H. B., a Mechanic." It was said that "as a proof of the firmness of the ice a Sheffield gent., on a fine spirited horse, trotted round the cricketers and afterwards astonished the natives with a display *à la* Ducrow, which was followed with an exhibition of fireworks given by Mr. Gascoigne, artist of the town, and one of the players." It may interest present-day followers of Yorkshire cricket to know that among the eighteen comprising the two teams were players named Booth, Wilson, Kilner and Rhodes.

Early in the following year, when there was a severe and prolonged frost, which enabled such games to be played in all parts of the country, the versifier already mentioned was again to the fore in celebrating the prowess of his heroes in halting rhyme. A few lines from the lay of 1838 may be quoted as a specimen of his handiwork:

> Ye cricket players, boast no more
> Of playing upon grass,
> Since Sheffielders can play on ice
> As slippery as glass;

Of piercing cold and heavy falls
Not being much afraid,
On Little London Dam, on skates,
Another match they've played.

. . . .

The scorer cried, "'Tis dinner time,
So now we'll go ashore;
With three wide balls, and ten for byes,
Your side's got eighty-four."

. . . .

'Tis difficult to play in skates,
And though some players fell,
Tom Marsden says, take all in all,
They played uncommon well.

One of these Sheffield matches has become historic by reason of a score of 162, which would appear to be a record for ice cricket, made by Henry Sampson, one of the best batsmen in Yorkshire then and for some years afterwards. No reference to this game is to be found in the ample pages of *Scores and Biographies*, and as the score has probably never been reproduced no apology need be made for giving it here:

On the Ice at Sheffield, February 8, 1841.

Sheffield Wednesday (Cricketers).		Sheffield (Skaters).	
P. Smith, c Rodger	0	— Ashton, h w	0
G. Savile, b Rodger	0	— Oates, b Sampson	2
C. Ward, b Parkin	0	— Parkin, run out	6
H. Sampson, b Rodger	162	— Wild, run out	0
— Harris, b Rodger	14	W. Padley, not out	0
— Wilson, b Rodger	35		
— Dodworth, run out	62		
— Padley, run out	0		
— Hawksby, run out	2		
— Gillot, not out	19		
— Carn, run out	2		
Byes 13, w 2	15	Byes, etc.	0
Total	311	Total (four wickets)	8

Some thousands of spectators were present, "among whom a number of highly respectable ladies assembled," and it was recorded that "the batting of Sampson was equal to anything even on the turf; his cuts and hitting to leg were admired by everyone present." The record breaker had good reason to regard 1841 with considerable personal satisfaction, especially as later in the year he beat Tom Marsden—then past his best, however—at single wicket by an innings and fifty runs, and was chosen for the Gentlemen *v.* Players match at Lord's.

In the early months of 1838 matches on skates were common in all parts of England. At Eridge Park, the seat of the Earl of Abergavenny, members of the Tunbridge Wells C.C. played frequently; at Wentworth Woodhouse cricketers were often entertained by Earl Fitzwilliam, whose hospitality was unbounded always; and during February games took place on the Ouse at Huntingdon. In Essex so many matches were contested on the ice that the proverbial intellectual foreigner or Macaulay's New Zealander would be excused for thinking that cricket was a recognized winter pastime. Mr. G. Archer, of Halstead, distinguished himself repeatedly, among his performances being to make fifty-five *v.* Earls Colne and to carry his bat through the innings against Gosfield. The latter feat was repeated on Marland Mere, Rochdale, on January 10, 1840, by Mr. John Mason, a most enthusiastic patron and player, whose portrait in oils adorns the pavilion of the Rochdale C.C. An account of the match in which Mr. Mason overshadowed his comrades stated that there were "few accidents, except that Mr. Philps, who is a neat skater, in one of his flourishes made a fundamental impression on the ice," an experience which is far indeed from being unique among those who have taken part in such games.

On Tenterden Mill-ponds, in December 1840, a match was played between Skaters and Non-Skaters, and as the latter scored 102 to their opponents' 58, the result was such as to suggest that it is easier to play on the ice without skates than with. However that may be, it cannot be denied that a far greater amount of enjoyment and exercise, to say nothing of excitement, falls to the lot of those on skates.

In January 1867, on the suggestion of Robert Carpenter, who excelled in skating—and cribbage—as well as in cricket, the Cambridgeshire team played at Swavesey against twenty-two of the district. Seven of the latter were run out, and the County, for whom Hayward, Carpenter, Tarrant and John Smith all turned out, won by thirty-four runs—126 to 92. Carpenter, with fifty-seven, was rungetter-in-chief. Similar games took place in later years, and in December 1878 a three-days' match was played at Grantchester between the Cambridge Town Club (326) and the University (274 for four wickets). For the Town, Carpenter (89) and Daniel Hayward (44) put on 132 for the tenth wicket in seventy minutes, whilst Messrs. H. Von E. Scott (88) and H. Pigg (69 not out) carried off the chief honours for Gown. As all who can recall it will readily agree, that winter enabled skaters to indulge themselves to an almost unprecedented extent. *Wisden* truly said: "All England will remember, with a shiver and a shudder, the long, sad and severe winter of 1878–9, commencing as it did in October '78 and continuing —with more or less severity—up to the middle of May '79; and even then the cold, nipping, bronchitis-creating winds seemed loth to leave the land they had so sorely stricken with distress, disease and death." Cricketers were not slow to take advantage of the frost, the consequence being that dozens of games

were played almost daily. In many of them it was arranged that a batsman should retire upon making twenty or twenty-five runs, but such was not the case in a match at Partington Carrs in January, when D. Hearfield scored 105 not out for L. W. Wallgate's Ten against C. Ullathorne's Ten. In one of the games at Eridge Park, Lord Henry Nevill carried out his bat for seventy—" a remarkably good innings, his lordship having been frequently applauded for the dexterity he displayed and the command he evinced over skates and bat "—whilst Sheffield maintained the reputation gained earlier in the century by beating Chesterfield, who were assisted by Harry Charlwood and William Mycroft. As a curiosity it may be added that in Windsor Home Park a match was played by moonlight on January 9th. The game commenced at seven o'clock, and attracted several hundreds of spectators, who were caused " no end of amusement owing to the difficulties encountered by the players while bowling, batting and fielding." The scoring was small on both sides, the totals being only 15 and 17.

One cannot read accounts of many such old-time matches without remarking how important an event in the day's proceedings the luncheon was considered. Some of the reports, in fact, devote as much space to particulars of the food consumed and the wines drunk as to details of the play. And—if one may believe the published accounts—how the tables must have groaned under the goodies!

> Instead of our slops they had cutlets and chops,
> And sack-possets, and ale in stoups, tankards, and pots;
> And they wound up the meal with rumpsteaks and 'schalots.

Of a game at Chesham in February 1841 we are told that " a collation cooked on the ice was partaken of

by the players." Truth to tell, matches on the ice have never been regarded very seriously. Far more often than not they have been arranged solely " for the fun of the thing," the only idea present in the minds of players and spectators alike being to amuse or be amused. Many will be able to recall the game at Sheffield Park on January 17, 1891, when some well-known Sussex county players distinguished themselves in a manner they could never have contemplated in their least sane moments. Harry Phillips's side scored 109 for seven wickets, and, owing to a thaw, the match was not finished. Earlier in the month, A. Anscombe had made 103 for Cuckfield against Horsted Keynes, on the latter's ice, among his strokes being a seven, two sixes and a five.

Students of the game's history are aware that the present universality of cricket can be attributed largely to the efforts of those in the Navy and the Army, for, as Mr. Pycroft observed over seventy years ago, " our soldiers and sailors astonish the natives of every clime, both inland and maritime, with a specimen of a British game." This being so, it is only natural to find that occasionally a man-of-war's team has taken part in a match on ice. Such a game was played one night between the ships of the Training Squadrons at Recherché Bay, Spitzbergen (latitude 78° north), and was described as follows in the *Graphic* of September 28, 1895, by a correspondent on board H.M.S. *Calypso*:

> The sun was shining brightly, shining with all his might,
> And this was odd, because it was the middle of the night.

We started for the shore between 9 and 9.30 p.m., and reached it in safety, after bumping into not more than a dozen or so ice-bergs, the *Volage's* men going so far as to land on one and start a slide. The *Active* and *Calypso* took the field—or, rather, the

side of the hill—at about 9.30, the *Ruby* and *Volage* having won the toss. The pitch consisted of soft, mossy earth, with lots of stone and mossy hillocks; and the outfielding was, if possible, worse, as it included several dry watercourses. Our fast bowler made a start at the glacier end. The first ball, pitching to leg, altered its course at right angles to the off, and was chased by the batsman, who made one off it. This sort of thing continued till one pitched on the wrong side of a hillock and stopped altogether, allowing the batsman to walk out and have a shot at it sitting. We were lucky in getting this man out with a ball pitching wide to the off taking his leg bail. Then came the stand of the innings, in spite of the efforts of long stop, who was fielding in a valley, and cover point, who was smartly saving boundaries —i.e. the sea. However, we eventually ran one of them out, as a ball, after being hit pretty hard, bounded from a rock towards the wicket, much to the disgust of the batsman. This appeared to demoralize our opponents, and we got rid of the rest in various uncouth ways for a total of 57. The in side were indulging in duck shooting close by and bagged one duck. When we went in we made a better show, as we had begun to understand the eccentricities of the wicket, and soon knocked up 58 and won a glorious victory with five wickets in hand. One midshipman made twenty-nine for us by vigorous hitting, and upset the preparations for supper off a full pitch to leg. We then all had some cocoa, something to eat, and returned on board at about 12.30 p.m.

A somewhat similar game—though unworthy of the title of match, seeing that it was merely practice and was played with an improvised ball—took place by the light of the midnight sun on the deck of the *Lusitania* in the ice fiord at Spitzbergen on August 12, 1894. It was arranged on the suggestion of the late Earl of Sheffield, and was rendered somewhat noteworthy by the fact that Alfred Shaw bowled throughout and with such success that in about forty-five minutes he disposed of practically all the gentlemen passengers and officers, about forty persons all told, who stood up against him. The novelty of the thing pleased

everyone, and Shaw himself said: "The light was equal to noonday at an English cricket match; indeed, it was better than the average light at one or two famous cricket grounds in the north of England that I know of." Over seventy years earlier the crews of the *Fury* and *Hecla* had played at Igoolik (latitude 69° north), their winter quarters in 1822–3, and a drawing by Captain Lyon, R.N., depicting a practice game, forms the frontispiece of Parry's *Journal of a Second Voyage, etc.*

At times during our English cricket season the weather has been so cold as to make playing an ordeal instead of a pleasure. Occasionally, however, the effect has been humorous. Thus, early in June 1907, a new club was formed near Brighton, and the members arranged to indulge in a trial match on the 12th of that month. Believing, however, that the bad weather which had been experienced would continue, they decided that they should toss, not for choice of innings, but whether they should play the match as arranged or go to the Brighton Hippodrome! Mr. P. G. Wodehouse, an old Dulwich cricketer, has made an amusing reference in one of his novels to the uncricket-like weather occasionally experienced in this country during August and September. "The late English summer," he wrote, in an account of an invasion by Russians and Germans, "had set in with all its usual severity, and the Cossacks, reared in the kindlier climate of Siberia, were feeling it terribly. Colds were the rule rather than the exception in the Russian lines. The coughing of the Germans at Tottenham could be heard at Oxford Street." And here it may be recalled that in August 1825 a match in Kent was stopped by hail, which broke the stumps, "and the players, unable to obtain shelter, were severely maimed and otherwise

disfigured." Coming to more recent times, it may be added that on June 16, 1906, so heavy a hailstorm was experienced at Windsor that the hailstones had to be swept from the pitch in the middle of an innings.

Even more unseasonable, however, was the weather during the match between England (Parr's team) and Twenty-two of the United States and Canada at Rochester (U.S.) in October 1859. On the previous day a scratch game at Hamilton had been given up on account of the cold, and of the fixture at Rochester *Scores and Biographies* remarked: "Weather dreadfully cold; in fact, the umpires ought to have decided that it was unfit for play." The match commenced on the 21st of the month. Owing to snow the game could not be continued on the 22nd, when, preferring not to be idle, the Englishmen tried their hand at baseball. On the 23rd, a Sunday, the tourists went to Niagara, 140 miles away, and on the 24th struggled on manfully with the game to the bitter end. In Fred Lillywhite's book on the tour it is said that "The players had to field in muffs and greatcoats, and such was the cold they could scarcely feel the handle of the bat or know whether they had fielded the ball or not; indeed, such cricketing weather had never before been experienced. It was really like playing a match in the depth of winter, and the batsman very appropriately exclaimed, when his wicket was lowered by a ball from Wisden's end, 'Shiver my timbers, I'm out!' The most agreeable thing on such a day could only be obtained indoors with a hot dinner before you, and a bottle of old port to follow." Concerning that last day's play, Caffyn recalls that George Parr had a turn at umpiring, and that he was not long in finding a substitute and adjourning to the pavilion to hot gin and water. Thirty-three years later to the very month a match at Manheim

between the Gentlemen of Ireland and the Gentlemen of Philadelphia was abandoned on the second day owing to the cold weather. "It had been blowing a hurricane all the morning, and was fearfully cold, with a short shower every now and then."

It has frequently happened that in May the weather has been more fit for football than for cricket, and those who took part in the match between Oxford University and the Gentlemen of England in 1891 will doubtless be able to recall their experience on the third day when, during Oxford's second innings, all the fieldsmen wore ulsters or overcoats, and most of them gloves as well. During the night there was a very severe frost, which withered the ivy on the pavilion. Mr. Ernest Smith described the weather as "a kind of snow gale." It was, too, when the thermometer was very low that Notts scored 726, then the record total in county cricket, against Sussex at Trent Bridge in 1895. Ranjitsinhji especially felt the cold keenly, and Mr. W. L. Murdoch, owing to his numbed hands, missed a catch from William Gunn, who made 219, when that player's score stood at thirty-five. At Church on May 7, 1910, the weather was so cold that play was stopped several times whilst the cricketers partook of coffee. "The cricket contained as many intervals as incidents," recorded a faithful chronicler.

In Lincolnshire, old-time cricketers are fond of recalling a match between the Barton and St. Augustine's clubs, in which the fieldsmen played in mackintoshes —it was snowing hard and the ground was covered with three inches of snow—and in which, although the latter at one time appeared to have matters all their own way, Messrs. Gooseman and Smith magnificently won the day for Barton. A somewhat similar game had taken place on April 16, 1838, in reference to

which *Bell's Life* remarked: "We had the pleasure of witnessing on Monday last the novelty of a cricket match in a snowstorm, on which day the Windsor Victoria Club, determined not to be disappointed of their day's amusement, turned out in the Bachelor's Acre. The wintry state of the weather prevented the attendance of much company, but nevertheless the game was proceeded with." Ten men played on each side, and Mr. R. Stevens's team, making only 47 and 55, were beaten by Mr. J. Bailey's by an innings and 24 runs. The report of the match concluded with the statement that "the parties afterwards finished the day at the Hope Inn, where a dinner was served up in the usual liberal manner of the worthy landlord." Evidently the latter event would have commended itself thoroughly to Harry Richmond's coachman, who included the dinner among the attractions of cricket. "It comprises—count: lots o' running (and that's good), just enough o' taking it easy (that's good), a appetite for your dinner, and your ale or your port, as may be the case (good number three)."

A year later—on May 14, 1839, to be exact—Eton played the M.C.C. on the College ground, and, according to *Scores and Biographies*, "a snowstorm came on during this match." On May 22 and 23, 1867, the Perambulators met the Etceteras on the Trinity ground, Cambridge, and Mr. Haygarth remarks that, "During the match those engaged had frequently to retreat owing to hurricanes of hail, sleet and snow—a curious event this time of the year." Six years subsequently the Hurstpierpoint *v.* Ardingly match was stopped by a snowstorm, but as the game took place as early as April 25th the occurrence was not particularly remarkable. Quite extraordinary, however, was the weather experienced for the time of year in the match between

Lancashire and Cambridge University at Manchester on June 12, 13 and 14, 1882. Mr. W. N. Roe, who was playing for the University, and who could therefore speak feelingly on the subject, has said: "Snow fell on the second day, and it was freezing on the other two days; at any rate, it seemed to freeze. I remember that when Nash, the last Lancashire man, came in, he was missed off every ball of an over from Ramsay. Off the last ball (four to the over) he made a run, and so had a chance of giving a catch off C. T. Studd's bowling. Off the very next ball he sent an easy catch to me at mid-off, where I was standing, with my hands as cold as ice. On the instant that the crowd saw the ball go up they began to boo tremendously, and I felt certain that I should not make the catch. But by great good fortune the ball stuck, and I felt very happy." This incident recalls the fact that on June 3, 1909, play in the match between Gloucestershire and Sussex at Bristol was restricted to ninety minutes by rain and snow. The late Mr. John G. Francis, of Suffolk, took part in a game at Earl Soham, played late in the month of May, when snow had to be cleared off the pitch before play could commence: the game was followed by a snow-balling match.

Surrey's programme of matches at the Oval has often commenced in mid-April, the consequence being that more than once the games have been played in Arctic weather. Thus, when London County were met in 1903, snow fell on each of the first two days, causing a ten minutes' interruption on the Monday. For the comfort of the club's members there was a roaring fire in the pavilion, and it was much appreciated. Five years later, when a team styled the Gentlemen of England inaugurated the season's cricket, a fall of snow on the first day caused a cessation of play for thirty minutes,

during which tea, coffee, hot milk and other comforting beverages were much in request. In conclusion, it was said that when the Australians were playing London County at the Crystal Palace in the first week of May 1902, many of them saw snow for the first time.

CHAPTER III

AN OLD CRICKETER'S STORY

ALTHOUGH he lived under as many as five sovereigns, Mr. Edward Hodges (1818–1907), who was a nephew of the famous Mr. John Willes, was, to the last, a young man in spirits and enthusiasm. His memory for events of his early years was wonderful, whilst his energy and activity would have been considered unusual in a man thirty years his junior. At the time of his birth the present Lord's ground had been only recently formed, Mr. William Ward had yet to play his historic innings of 278, and several of the Hambledon cricketers were still in the flesh.

Mr. Hodges attended matches at Lord's for about seventy-five years, and he knew Alfred Mynn before he began to play county cricket, whilst the performances of the great Kent Eleven, which included such cricketing giants as Pilch, Felix, Hillyer, Wenman, Mynn, Adams and others, were events almost of his middle age. He himself had naturally given up playing some years before his long life ended, preferring to participate in the more sedate amusement of croquet, but he never lost his interest in the game and always made a point of watching as many good matches as possible. Even during his last few months he rendered many a song in capital style to his own accompaniment on the guitar, and, as he himself modestly expressed it, was "still a bit of an artist." Whilst full of enthusiasm for the men who performed their great deeds in his young days, he was by no means unappreciative of the ability of more recent players: he much admired the pluck

and skill of Messrs. Stanley Christopherson and Bradley, and he spoke of the pleasure he had derived from watching Ranjitsinhji and Mr. Mason. When referring to old-time players, he realistically illustrated their chief strokes with the aid of a walking-stick.

"I was born at Bellringham, near Sutton Valence, the seat of my uncle, Mr. John Willes," said Mr. Hodges, "and was brought up in his house. It was there, under his tuition, that I learned the game. I left his roof when about eleven years of age, and often walked over from Maidstone to see him. Afterwards I moved into Devonshire, and I can still vividly remember how impressed I was the first time I saw the British Fleet *under sail* in Torbay: that, of course, was in the pre-ironclad days. There was no cricket played at Torquay at that time, so I used to go out with a bat and ball on Daddy Hole Plain and play alone. Later I went to Newton Abbot, and was fortunate enough to get some good cricket there. Every summer I spent my holidays in Kent, where I took part in some most pleasant matches, but only once did I appear for the Gentlemen of Kent in the Canterbury Week. There was a strong club at River, near Dover, at the time, and to this I belonged. Edward and John Banks, both County men, and my kinsman, the Rev. E. H. L. Willes, who captained Oxford two years, were members. Once we managed to beat Canterbury, when they brought down Pilch, Willsher and Fryer against us. The Banks were great supporters of cricket, and used to entertain largely at their seat, Oxney Court, the grounds of which, either by accident or design, were shaped exactly the same as the field of the Battle of Waterloo. At one time I played a good deal at Battersea, and made some hundreds there. My uncle taught me the value of playing with a straight bat, and consequently I was often able to

keep up my wicket for some time, although runs did not always come quickly. He liked to show me off, and in a match at Maidstone once had the stumps brought out before play began, and asked Mynn to send me down a few balls His deliveries then were terrific, and pads had not at that time become general. A ball was pitched to leg, and I managed to hit it right away, much to the delight of my uncle, who then drew the stumps and took me away, fearing Mynn might bowl me the next ball."

"Which do you consider the best-contested match you have ever seen?"

"It would be difficult to say, for I have witnessed so many during the last eighty years or so, but the Kent and England match, played for Pilch's benefit at Town Malling in 1839, would take a lot of beating. Kent led by fifteen runs on the first innings and eventually won by two. When old William Lillywhite went in, last man, in the second innings of England, three runs were required to win, and a gentleman present promised Hillyer five pounds if he bowled him in his next over. Hillyer's first ball just missed the wicket and the second proved fatal. There was naturally much enthusiasm at the finish. Thirty-seven years later I saw 'W. G.' make his 344 against Kent on the St Lawrence ground. It was a magnificent display, for he made his runs fast and without a mistake, but I had always been so keen that my county should do well that it was not long before I wished him anywhere but at the wicket. There can be no doubt that cricket is a much more scientific game now than it was during my time, this being due largely, so I think, to the admirable coaching boys receive at the Public Schools. But the large scores so conspicuous nowadays would have been impossible in earlier times. The lawn-mower has revolutionized the

game. Pilch, so I have been told, used to go round the country with the England Eleven with a scythe in his bag to cut the grass between the wickets."

"Lord's must have been very different when you first went there from what it is now?"

"Yes, indeed! In those days it was almost as frequently called Dark's ground as Lord's. There was no house between it and the Swiss Cottage on the one hand, nor between it and the Eyre Arms on the other, whilst the Nursery ground had not then been formed. It was there that I first met Lord Frederick Beauclerk. I was with my uncle at the time, and Lord Frederick, who was accompanied by a fox-terrier, catching sight of him, called out, 'How are you, Willes?' I was told afterwards that his lordship was the only person allowed to take a dog on the ground. Some years later I saw Mynn play his single-wicket match at Lord's against Felix. The latter, who had for some time practised assiduously against the catapulta, which he invented, had no chance, and was easily beaten. 'Bob' FitzGerald, for several years Honorary Secretary of the M.C.C., was one of my most intimate friends. He was a clever man, with a charming manner and much wit."

"I believe it was Mr. Willes who taught Alfred Mynn the game?"

"My uncle had a cricket ground just below his house, and it was there that Alfred and his brother Walter first began to play. I can remember what a long time it was before Mynn could bowl straight, and how we all used to laugh at him. Dear genial Alfred! A more delightful man never lived. When he first began to play he took a very long, fatiguing run, and it was on my uncle's suggestion that he adopted the six-step approach to the wicket that he retained until the end of his career. I knew all the brothers. John,

the eldest, was an even finer and more handsome man than Alfred. Think of that! Next came William, and then Walter, who once made a sensation by eloping from Maidstone with the daughter of a retired post-master. Walter survived his brothers some years, but did not make headway in the world, and, when last I met him, was keeping a billiard-room somewhere off the Edgware Road. Alfred was a most kind-hearted man, and the last person in the world to hurt the feelings of anyone, but one day he was in the company of some friends and cricketers when a common fellow, wishing, I suppose, to show off his courage, began to banter Mynn and raise his temper. Alfred bore it patiently for some time, but at last, unable to stand it any longer, walked over to the fellow without saying a word, caught him up by the scruff of the neck and lifted him up and dropped him out of the window, which was about eight feet from the ground. Things, I fear, did not prosper with Alfred, but he had some generous friends in the brothers Banks and Walker and Lord Cavendish. The last-named used to follow him from place to place in order to see him perform, and was always eulogizing his play. Once, just before the commencement of an important match, I saw him liquidate a debt for Mynn, and so prevent his arrest, for which a warrant was about to be served."

All students of the game are aware that it was Tom Walker, of Surrey, who (about 1792) first essayed round-armed bowling. Owing to its tremendous pace, however, it was disallowed, and, as Walker had neither the position nor ability to urge its claims to recognition, it was left for Mr. John Willes to introduce it at Lord's. A match was played at Dartford Brent in 1794 between sides headed by Walker and David Harris in order to test its efficiency, and, although Walker's side won a

low-scoring game by fifty-three runs, the style was not sanctioned for the reason stated. Asked what it was that suggested the idea of round-armed bowling to his uncle, Mr. Hodges replied:

"It was my mother's skill in *throwing* the ball to him for practice in a barn at Fonford, near Canterbury. He trained a dog to fetch the ball, and there was a saying that Willes, his sister and his dog could beat any eleven in England. There was a great hubbub when he endeavoured to bowl in the new style in the great matches, some being in favour of the innovation and others, the majority, against it. When he played on the side of Lord Frederick Beauclerk his bowling was fair; when against him the contrary. In 1822 my uncle took a Kent team to Lord's to play the M.C.C., but, when they barred his bowling, he threw down the ball in disgust, and, jumping upon his horse, rode home and left all the players in the lurch. There were no railways in those days, and he told me that it cost him a hundred pounds to take an eleven up to London. He did not play often after that, but took to fox-hunting and shooting, and kept his pack of hounds, which were long known all over the county for their fine breed. Many years afterwards, when I belonged to a club at Battersea Park, I had just related the Lord's incident to the players when an old, white-haired gentleman rose from his seat in the tent, advanced towards me, and said, 'Sir, what you have just related about Mr. John Willes is perfectly true. I was a member at Lord's then, I am a member now, and I was on the ground when it took place.'

"In some accounts my uncle is stated to have been a farmer, and even a professional. As a matter of fact he was a large landowner, having estates both in Kent and Sussex, where he often played. Lancing

College is built on one of his farms. In his later years he gave up fox-hunting, but continued to hunt a pack of harriers kept by his very dear friend Wilkins, of the Manor House, Sutton Valence. Wilkins himself never hunted, but kept them solely for the pleasure of seeing them together with pointers and setters. My uncle would never ride to a pack of harriers. Then Bellringham, a beautifully situated house with a large plantation, was sold. It overlooked the Weald of Kent, and from its windows you could see twenty-five churches and the railway running along for almost thirty miles. He settled afterwards at Staunton, near Gloucester, and died there, but is buried at Sutton Valence. He was most temperate in his habits and generous to his brother William, but he muddled away his fortune. His lawyer, who lived at Charing, told me that he often rode up to his house shouting out, 'I want five hundred pounds!'"

"Did Mr. Willes give up the game entirely after his bowling was barred at Lord's?"

"He often stood umpire in the Sutton Valence matches, but did not play as frequently as before, though he promoted a large number of games. I remember asking him if he made any money out of cricket, as they used to bet and play for stakes in his time, and he then told me of a match played for a hundred pounds between Sutton Valence and Staplehurst, a village about five miles distant. Staplehurst in those days had one of the best teams in that part of Kent and thought themselves invincible, and, to use my uncle's words, made cocksure of winning. He drilled the Sutton Valence eleven to perfection, and told me that the practising catching was so severe that the villagers' hands were covered with blood and the first joint of his own forefinger put out of

joint. They had on their side an old gentleman, a bowler, who, by using all the strength he possessed, was just able to make the ball keep a good length. Staplehurst lost, and found it so difficult a matter to pay the hundred pounds that it broke up the club. Before the match one of the supporters of the home side was known to possess a fine flock of sheep, but it disappeared about the time the stakes were claimed. My uncle had a *bonhomie* which was irresistible, and which endeared him to everybody with whom he associated. When the Sutton Valence team would be returning home late from a match he would leave bottles of brandy and whisky, with glasses and a pail of water, outside his hall door for them to help themselves. The cricketers would then serenade him, and I recall them singing the old hunting-song—

> There were Spero, Spendigo, Bonnylass and Truelove,
> And Ruler that never looked behind him.

He was a very handsome man. On one occasion, just as I was about to go in in a match, Alfred Mynn said to me: 'You are not bad-looking, Edward, but you will *never* be so good-looking as your uncle John.' "

"Mr. Willes, I think, was an adept at several sports besides cricket?"

"He was a good boxer and a capital rider and shot. Gully, who started business life as a butcher, and, after gaining high honours in the P.R., sat in Parliament for Pontefract, lived not far from us at Sutton Valence. I remember him well. My uncle once showed me where, on riding home across country from a visit to his friend Charles Springett, he jumped his grey mare over a high stile, down very steep and irregular stone steps between twenty and thirty feet deep, into a very narrow lane. How any horse could have done

it with safety I cannot think: at the time it seemed to me that my uncle did it in order to break his neck. On another occasion Captain Mansel, who was staying at Sutton, had a very vicious and intractable horse with him, and neither he nor the grooms could do anything with him. 'Bring him to me,' said Uncle. The horse was brought, led by two long halters by the two grooms. When at length it was mounted, the animal at once began attempting to throw the rider, but in vain. Then it galloped up the hill, and, when at the top, tried to smash my uncle's legs by beating itself against a wall, but the attempts were met by blows from the butt-end of a hunting-whip. I can't remember all the incidents of the hazardous ride—to his friend, Colonel Best, at Boxley, about nine miles off—but once, when almost unseated, he lost his hunting-whip. I asked, 'What did you do then?' and he replied, 'Why, I got him close to a hedge, pulled up a hedge-stake, and every time he wanted to go the wrong way gave him a smack on the head!' By the time he arrived at Boxley the horse was almost done up and was flecked all over with foam. The Colonel was astonished at the sight. Uncle did not dismount, and, when he arrived home again with the horse thoroughly broken in, found Captain Mansel and the grooms awaiting him.

"One September morning I was out with him partridge-shooting, carrying the game-bag, and, boy-like, was saying that I thought 'it was not very difficult to hit a bird: one had only to point the gun about a foot before the head and let fly.' This seemed to nettle him, for he suddenly thrust the gun (a Joe Manton) into my hands, saying, 'Here! Take the gun!' and walked on. Presently old Fairy, a setter, dropped down, making a point. We followed up, and Uncle sang out to the dog, 'Shoot in!' A single

bird flew up. I fired and, fortunately for me, brought it down—the first I ever shot at. 'Ah, ah! Master Teddy,' my uncle exclaimed, 'if you had missed, you would never have heard the last of it!' We wandered on, and presently came to a ploughed field, when a hare shot out of the hedge and made off across the field. I was so flurried that I could not shoot. Uncle called out, 'Shoot, shoot! Why don't you shoot?' and, snatching the gun from me, killed the hare, which, being about fifty yards off, shows what a good shot he must have been."

"There seems to have been something in Mr. Willes's nature characteristic of John Mytton."

"He was certainly a reckless and very dare-devil person, and seemed to stop at nothing. When I was a youth I heard of an incident which well illustrates the truth of this. At one time he knew a young lady in Harrietsham, and one day he said to her, 'If I drove up in a coach-and-four, would you run away with me?' The lady replied that she would, and a few days later my uncle appeared before her house with such a conveyance. He got out, held open the door, the lady popped into the coach, and away they drove as fast as the animals could cover the ground. The lady's father chanced to be close at hand, however, and, mounting his horse and seizing a pistol, furiously gave chase. He gained on the runaways so rapidly that the lady decided to dismount and meet her father, whilst the coach with its solitary occupant went rumbling on. When I innocently asked my uncle if the story were true, he demanded to know how I ever came to hear of it, and his anger was not appeased when I had to confess that a lady of his acquaintance told me the facts. It may, of course, have been simply a joke on his part from the first, but whether it was so or not I never could discover."

CHAPTER IV

A GIRDLE ROUND THE EARTH

You may search the world all round,
But where Englishmen are found,
From the frozen Polar Ocean to the far Antipodes,
Where there's room to pitch a wicket
You will find us playing cricket,
For King Willow rules the meadows
As Britannia rules the seas.

ANON.

IT is many years since a "poet" wrote:

No German, Frenchman, or Fijee will ever master cricket, sir,
Because they haven't got the pluck to stand before the wicket, sir.

The falsity of the lines has long been proved, and cricket can claim to be played in almost every part of the world. Pycroft never spoke truer words than when he said: "Every regiment and every man-o'-war has its club; and our soldiers and sailors astonish the natives of every clime, both inland and maritime, with a specimen of a British game." Did not members of the Royal Navy play "Krickett" near Aleppo (about seventy miles east of the Mediterranean) as early as 1676, the crews of H.M. ships *Fury* and *Hecla* do the same as far north as latitude 69° at Igloolik in 1822, the men of the Training Squadrons play at Recherché Bay, Spitzbergen, when

The sun was shining brightly, shining with all his might,
And this was odd, because it was the middle of the night.

And did not our troops proceed to pitch wickets in Baghdad the day after the city was captured? Not

every follower of the game is aware of the difficulties with which our sailors have had to contend in order to enjoy a game. They have even gone to the length of cleaning a ditch surrounding an obsolete fortress in Cyprus so as to play a pick-up match, and more than once boat sails have been laid down on an African desert in order to procure a pitch which would be a billiard-table compared with the outfield.

A facetious critic once wrote: "The game is essentially English, and though our countrymen carry it abroad wherever they go, it is difficult to inoculate or knock it into the foreigner. The Italians are too fat for cricket; the French too thin; the Dutch too dumpy; the Belgians too bilious; the Flemish too flatulent; the East Indians too peppery; the Laplanders too bow-legged; the Swiss too sentimental; the Greeks too lazy; the Egyptians too long in the neck; and the Germans too short in the wind."

The appended notes, it may be well to point out, touch only lightly on early cricket abroad, for to deal with the subject in any detail would require far more space than is at command. As a similar review has not been attempted before, it is hoped that some of the information which follows will be found useful and not without interest.

I. Europe.

Details of the beginnings of cricket in France are lost in the mists of antiquity, for it can be said, as of many other countries, that the game was played there before details were published. Yet we know that as early as 1777 Boydell issued an engraving showing a match in progress at Belle Isle, and that within the next decade it was only the outbreak of the French Revolution which prevented the Surrey team, on the suggestion

of the Duke of Dorset, then our Ambassador in Paris, going over to show the game in the Bois de Boulogne. The eleven, in fact, had journeyed as far as Dover —Yalden, the wicket-keeper, had been chosen captain —when, most unexpectedly, it was met by the Duke, who was flying before the coming storm. Soon after the Napoleonic wars the game took firm root in the country, owing largely to the presence of lace-workers from Nottingham, and before the middle of the last century clubs existed, if they did not actually flourish, at Dieppe, Calais, Boulogne, Bordeaux, St. Servan, Paris, St. Omer, and other places. Tom Creevey, writing in his *Journal* under date "Cambrai, July 16, 1818," tells how, "To-day I rode to see a cricket match between the officers near the town, and presently the Duke of Wellington rode there likewise, accompanied by Mrs. Hervey and Miss Caton. . . . He asked me to dine with him that day, but I was engaged to the officers who were playing the match." As early as 1833 St. Omer met Boulogne three times, the former team including Mr. Wettenhall, senior, aged sixty-two, four of his sons and a grandson. Messrs. Woodbridge and Charles Beauclerk, both well known at Lord's, were supporters of the St. Omer Cricket Club, whose ground was described as "an open plain, a fine sward, on a free-stone bottom, which makes it peculiarly elastic." It was, therefore, evidently superior to that at Boulogne, which was stated to be "a meadow, which was cropped last year." In 1840 home-and-home matches were played between Calais and the River Cricket Club, of Dover, "after being three years on the *tapis*," and five years later a good cricket ground was formed at the residence of Mr. N. Johnstone, at Lescure, Bordeaux. At the last-mentioned place the game flourished so well that during the first season

about forty members, a third of whom were French, were enrolled. An impetus to the game across the Channel was given by occasional visits of teams from Nottingham, and respecting one of these events—in 1846—the late Dean Hole wrote:

> That England has no rival
> Well know the trembling pack,
> Whom Charley Brown by Calais town
> Bowl'd out behind his back,

the said Brown possessing the genius of being able to deliver the ball at a good pace round his back with astonishing precision.

Since those far-distant days several well-known clubs, including M.C.C. and Butterflies, have played in France, and such events have almost invariably been productive of curious comments from the locals, whose views were, to say the least, generally original. Thus, when the M.C.C. were in Paris in 1867, a Frenchman remarked to "Bob" FitzGerald: "It is a truly magnificent game, but I cannot understand why you do not engage a servant to field for you instead of having so much running about to do yourself." And in a report of the play it was recorded: "The bowler, grasping the ball in the right hand, watches for the favourable moment when the attention of the batsman is distracted, and then launches it at him with incredible force; the batsman, however, is on the alert; he strikes it to an enormous height, and immediately runs." This quaint view of things recalls the fact that, whilst the Emperor (Napoleon III), Empress and Prince Imperial were watching a match between Bickley Park and Beckenham, long-on brought off a difficult and spectacular catch. A minute or so later a gentleman-in-waiting, hat in hand, approached the successful

fieldsman with a message from the Emperor, thanking him very much for his performance, and asking him to do it again. On another occasion the Emperor asked whether a certain West Kent match was being played for money, and Frederick Edlmann answered in his most dignified manner, "No, sire; for honour." At least once, however, the same Napoleon proved a good friend to cricketers. He had visited the Paris Cricket Club, and had the game explained to him, and this circumstance saved the club, for a few days afterwards an old Oxford man, while making a run, tripped, fell and broke his arm. The matter was at once reported to the police, and the club was about to be suppressed as dangerous, when an appeal to the Emperor prevented so dire a calamity.

Reference to the Paris Cricket Club recalls that, in 1865, there was published a handbook of twenty-four pages entitled, *La Clef Du Cricket; ou Courte Explication De La Marche et Des Principales Règles De Ce Jeu. Par An Old Stump, M.P.C.C.* It dealt with cricket generally, and gave the twenty rules of the Paris Cricket Club.

The Club was formed in July 1863, and among its early Presidents were the Duke of Edinburgh and the Duc d'Aumale. In 1865 it presented to the Prince Imperial an outfit consisting of two bats, two sets of stumps (silver mounted, with ebony bails), two balls, pads, gloves and spiked boots; also a treatise on the game. The articles were enclosed in a handsome and massive mahogany case lined with green velvet, and on the lid of which was an engraved silver plate bearing the inscription, "A son Altesse Impériale, Monseigneur le Prince Impérial." The gift called forth the following acknowledgment to M. Drouyn de l'Huys, the Club's President:

TUILERIES, *June* 1, 1865.

SIR,—The foundation of a cricket club cannot fail to promote the development of the public health, if the practice of the game should become as general as I desire, and as your efforts give reason to hope. I heartily applaud this institution, and accept with pleasure the implements of the game which you have had the kindness to offer to the Prince Imperial. You are well aware, Sir, of my sentiments of high esteem and goodwill for yourself.

EUGÉNIE.

At the same time the Prince forwarded two thousand francs to the Club as a mark of the interest he took in its welfare, and in the following year, when he became a member, promised to subscribe one hundred francs annually.

The Emperor, when he visited the ground in 1865, confessed, "Je n'y comprends rien du tout." The Empress rejoined in English: "I understand a great deal, and I hope that next year the little Prince will have learnt this interesting game." Despite his ignorance of the finer points of cricket, His Majesty proved a good friend to the Club, and before the commencement of the season of 1867 granted it an important concession by giving it permission, through the Prefect of the Seine, to enclose and level its ground in the Bois de Boulogne.

The unconscious humour of which the French mind has proved so prolific was never more in evidence than in a "Guide," in which, by means of a conversation, an attempt was made to explain the intricacies of the game:

"Let us, then, observe the cricket game, my dear Gaston."

"But, my dear Henri, the cricket game I do not understand."

"Eh, bien, here is the tram; let us seat ourselves, and as we go I explain. There are eleven men on each side, two umpires, two wickets, a ball, and some guards, since the ball is very hard. A player stands at the wickets, and, behold, one hurls down at him the ball, the no-ball, the wide ball, the leg-break, the googly,

the head-break, the rapid, the very slow. C'est terrible! Mon Dieu, you will admire! The batter, who has a flat club, makes the strokes—the on-drive, the off-drive, the back-cut, the upper-cut, the leg-pull and the left hook, strokes of a skill incroyable. The crowd cries 'Brava!' like M. le Professeur Hall at the Opera. But, alas! The batter misses the ball; the wicket is knocked down. One cries 'How out?' and the umpire nods the head. Thereupon the batter retires, and they place upon the board his score and the letters l b w. Sometimes the umpire cries 'Over!' and all walk over to the other side for the sake of exercise. The game, Gaston, is of great simplicity. And—I almost forget—wearied by the continual striking of the ball, the batters, too, for the purpose of recuperation, run swiftly up and down between the wickets."

"It seems very dangerous, Henri."

"True! For me, I would rather exercise myself with diabolo or dominoes."

The description was written in all seriousness, and to this day the author of it probably considers that he produced a valuable treatise on the game.[1] Many years ago, I can recall, a "Maire" of a seaside resort much favoured by English families, decided to promote a fête for the benefit of the younger visitors, in which "Juvenile Sports," with cricket as the chief attraction, were to be held. The good man, wishing his plans to obtain as much publicity as possible, decided to make an English translation of the French posters and handbills. The idea was sound, but unfortunately the announcements in English were headed "Childish Games," much to the righteous indignation of the visiting youth old enough to take part in a properly organized match. It was amusing, too, when a fast bowler, after delivering two or three overs, was approached by a gendarme, who warned him, "Not so fast, sir, if you please—not so fast!" it evidently

[1] For another quaint description—from M. Kervigan's *L'Anglais à Paris*—see *Scores and Biographies*, ix, 307.

being his impression that injury was likely to result, possibly even to some of the spectators. All this notwithstanding, however, there is a serious side to the game in France, and for years there has been a cricket league in Paris. From time to time, too, France has met Belgium and Holland, and, on at least one occasion, Germany.

The visit of an M.C.C. team to Cologne in 1922 broke fresh ground, for never before had the premier club sent a side to Germany. Many followers of cricket may smile at the idea of the game being played in that country except by Englishmen, yet the fact remains that in 1910 the M.C.C. had been asked to send a team to Nürnberg, and that three years later attempts were made to induce an Australian side to play a series of matches in Germany in 1916. There probably was a certain amount of enthusiasm for the game there, but the standard of proficiency attained was very low, for when a Leicester team went to Berlin in 1911 it won each of its four games with an innings and over one hundred runs to spare.

The modern history of cricket in Germany really dates from 1858, when the Berlin Cricket Club, which became the Anglo-American Cricket Club, was formed. One of the most amusing features of the club's early matches was the large number of accidents with which the spectators met. The natives, not understanding the game, thought that the nearer they approached the better view would they obtain, and in this belief they persisted, repeated warnings notwithstanding. Wrecked hats and parasols, contused shins and severe bruises became of almost everyday occurrence; but it was long before these would-be spectators, realizing that a cricket ball really can hurt, decided to give the cricket field a wide berth.

Homburg became an early centre of the game owing to the large number of English visitors who wished to avail themselves of the mineral springs there. Thus in August 1863, Lord Marcus Beresford, then a youth of fourteen, helped Homburg to beat Frankfort by an innings and six runs. In the same month an eleven of Cambridge University were seen in Dresden, where they beat the local club, in the Grosse Gehege, by seven wickets. The curious can find the full scores of both these games in Captain W. Bayly's *Cricket Chronicle for the Season 1863*. The greatest days of Homburg cricket, however, were in 1865, when there was a Grand Cricket Week. Among the well-known Englishmen who participated were Mr. J. Round, who kept wicket for the Gentlemen; the Rev. S. C. Voules, of Marlborough and Oxford fame; and Mr. Charles Alcock, for so long Secretary to the Surrey County Cricket Club. Those who played enjoyed themselves immensely, but the inhabitants, not understanding the game, looked on in stolid silence, evidently regarding cricket as hard work and not a recreation. To the German porters, too, the size and shape of the cricket bags were a source of wonder, at which they did not cease to express their astonishment for many a long day. The original idea was that "England" should play fourteen of Europe, but, almost at the last moment, it was agreed that the latter side should consist of seventeen men. Although allowing such odds, the Englishmen won both games, the first after a fairly close finish, the second by an innings and fifty-one runs. The Festival was concluded by a match in which France, represented by the Paris Cricket Club, beat Germany. Mr. Alcock captained the successful side, and, as he made top score, was presented publicly with a cricket bat, which, as he declared, "must have been made in

France." For years afterwards a favourite match at Homburg was "Eton and Harrow *v.* The World." Several well-known players took part in these games at different times, including Mr. W. H. Long, afterwards the first Lord Long.

The Anglo-American Club, mentioned above, used to meet on the Hippodrome Riding Ground, "granted for their especial use by his Royal Highness the Crown Prince." This was at the corner of the Charlottenburg Road, near the Zoological Gardens. The Club's success, however, proved its undoing, for the Berliners, envious of its popularity, took it over, lock, stock and barrel —a high-handed action which caused no little resentment. One result of the proceeding was that more Germans became interested in the game, although the standard of the cricket was naturally not so high as before. The club, under its new auspices, used to assemble in the Tempelhofer Feld, and their chief match was with the Kjobenhaven Bold Club of Copenhagen.

Carlsruhe also was an early centre of the game, and a history of its doings was published as far back as 1874. Jena *v.* Weimar, too, was for long an annual match, the first meeting of the sides being in June 1883, when, after a terrific struggle, Jena won by a single run. Mention of the book on the Carlsruhe Cricket Club reminds one that at various times several publications on the game have been issued in Germany. Strange though it may seem, some of these enjoyed quite a good sale, notwithstanding that in the majority of instances they contained but little reading matter and illustrations only of such commonplace things as cricket-boots, bats and stumps, with perhaps a few diagrams for the placing of the field. Although of little value, however, from the English point of view, these handbooks have much interest for a collector of

cricket literature. One of the best of them was that issued at Stuttgart in 1893, the chief contents of which were a sketch of the game's history, an explanatory chapter on the laws and instructions for players. The author's knowledge of his subject was fairly sound, but the same cannot be said respecting the artist responsible for the illustrations. One of the plates, showing a game in progress, is decidedly amusing, for the bats are like Indian clubs, the wicket as broad as it is high, the creases of prodigious length, while something suspiciously like a holly bush is shown flourishing vigorously about half-way down the pitch. The telegraph board, too, is a short distance behind the wicket-keeper, while the fieldsmen are shown wearing knickerbockers and pads, and the bowlers using leg-guards and wicket-keeping gloves. On another page is a picture of a women's match. Here we find two of the fieldswomen standing so close in that they could shake hands with each other and the batswoman. There are apparently two wicket-keeperesses, and the umpire, a man, is shown standing so close in that nothing but an accident or Providence could possibly prevent him from being cut off in his prime.

A book which lacked such amusing blunders was published at Leipzig in 1907. From an Englishman's point of view the most valuable feature of this is the glossary of terms in English and German, with their pronunciation and the laws to which they refer. It might be worth while for some publisher in this country to expand the idea by giving a list of the chief terms used in the game with their French, Dutch and German equivalents. That the military occupation of the Rhine has done something to popularize the game in Germany is apparent from the fact that in one year alone the M.C.C., Gentlemen of Holland, Oxford Authentics,

Butterflies, Cryptics, Hampshire Hogs and other visiting teams played in Cologne. Furthermore, in 1919 as many as one hundred and eighty sides entered for the *Cologne Post* competition, which was won by the 17th Lancers.

Over a hundred years earlier, however, an event of the greatest political importance had enabled cricket to be seen in an unaccustomed setting, for Lord William Pitt Lennox has recorded: "Our next innings came off at Vienna, during the Congress of 1815, when a chosen few witnessed the game on the Prater." But cricket did not thrive there in consequence; in fact it was not until 1892 that sufficient enthusiasm was found to form a Vienna Cricket Club.

In the Iberian Peninsula the game is known to have been played over a century ago, for an officer who served under Major-General Robert Craufurd in the famous Light Division wrote in his Journal to the following effect in 1810, shortly before the Battle of Busaco: "We found things pretty slow, kicking our heels in idleness at Lisbon. So one of us got a kindly ship's carpenter to make us some cricket implements. He did very well, but the difficulty was the ball. He turned a piece of wood about the size and shape of a cricket ball, but this missile proved more deadly than the enemy's fire, and after several of us had been more or less severely wounded, we abandoned this form of amusement. Later, however, the game was resumed when proper implements had been received from England." Lisbon *v.* Oporto has long been a regular fixture, and, considering the difficulties of travel which had to be contended with, it said much for the keenness of the players that the matches took place. Thus, when the sides met at Lisbon in 1873, it was reported that the journey of the Oporto team, two hundred miles

by rail, took thirteen hours to perform "through a sweltering sun." This notwithstanding, however, the Oporto men won a well-contested game by eleven runs. Several teams from England have visited the country, giving a most welcome fillip to the game. So far as Spain is concerned, there is an interesting note in Captain the Hon. D. Bingham's *Recollections of Paris*, in which, referring to the year 1867, he wrote: "With the aid of some artillery-men, who had come over with English guns to the Exhibition, we got up a very fair eleven, of which I was captain, and played a foreign eleven—an eleven of Spaniards or Spanish-speaking lads from the South American Republic, who were being educated in England and had come over to Paris to see the Exhibition. . . . Alas! we lost the match by one run. The Spanish bowling was a trifle too good for us." Seville saw the game played for the first time on April 15, 1865, when Utrera and Xeres met in a third and deciding match, each side having previously won once. The play, we are told, "took place on a vast plain, delightfully situated. . . . The Union Jack and the Spanish flag were suspended from the cricket tent, and the ground was kept by mounted municipal guards. Great numbers of people flocked to the ground for the double object of seeing the game and the twelve bulls grazing on the plain, which had to play their part in the fight of the following day." It will be recalled that in 1921 a team from Bilbao visited England, winning three games and losing two.

It is always interesting to hear a foreigner's candid view of cricket, and therefore the following short extracts are taken from a Lisbon paper of over fifty years ago: ". . . An active, running, driving, jumping game, which can only be played by a person having a good pair of legs, and in a climate where warmed

punch is found insufficient to keep up animal heat. . . . Sometimes it (the ball) tumbles into a thicket and the players take hours before they can get hold of it, and all this time the player does not cease running from post to post and marking points. . . . At other times the projectile sent with a vigorous arm cannot be stopped, and breaks the leg of the party who awaits it. The arrangements for the cricket match include a sumptuous dinner in the marquee for fifty persons, an indispensable accompaniment to every cricket match." Quaint as much of the foregoing is, it hardly surpasses in sheer drollery the following, which appeared in the *Commercio do Porto* in 1895, the year in which "W. G." received a national testimonial: "The value of the *objets d'art*—chronometers, chains, rings, medals, etc.—which have been presented to him are worth nearly eighty millions of reis. He earns some forty millions of reis per annum, that is to say, more than the Duke of Cambridge as Commander-in-Chief, and more than most magistrates and other British functionaries receive."

It is many years since *Punch* wrote:

> In matters of cricket the fault of the Dutch
> Is hitting too little and missing too much.

Such lines would be libellous now, and would have been for long past. When the game in Holland was young the standard of play was naturally far from high, but pains were taken, and with success, to eradicate faults and effect improvement. There is a record of the existence as far back as 1855 of a club at Utrecht, formed by some gentlemen from the Cape of Good Hope, who were then at Utrecht University, but all particulars of its doings seem to have been lost. For all practical purposes the history of the game in the country may be said to date from October 13, 1875,

when the first Dutch cricket club was formed, at Daventer, by Mr. Romiju, a former Consul in England, who, though not a player himself, was quite enthusiastic about the game. Owing chiefly to the lack of instructors, however, the club had only a short existence; but in May 1878 the Haageche Club was formed under the title of the Concordia Cricket Club, and it was soon followed by the institution of others at Haarlem, Amsterdam, Utrecht, Leyden, Rotterdam, etc. In fact, such popularity was there for the game that within ten years over one hundred clubs were established. It was in 1881 that an English side, the Uxbridge Cricket Club, was seen in Holland for the first time, and, although not strong, it was good enough to dismiss Twenty-two of Holland for totals of 14 and 33, there being sixteen "ducks" in the first innings and thirteen in the second. As it was recorded that "many thousands must have paid for admission," it is evident that the game must already have progressed far in the affections of the public. That tour was the first of almost fifty which have been made from this country, among the sides which have made the trip being the Gentlemen of Worcestershire, M.C.C., Gentlemen of Bucks and Free Foresters. In September 1883 the Dutch Cricket Union (Nederlandsche Cricket-Bond) was formed, and in 1887, through the generosity of Baron Tuyll, the patron of the Haarlem Club, the services of an English professional were obtained. A red-letter day in the annals of Dutch cricket occurred in 1888, when, for the first time, a visiting team (the Dalston Albert Cricket Club) was defeated. The successful side was the Hague Cricket Club, whose victory occasioned much joy. *Nederlandsche Sport*, in its description, did not fail to do full justice to the event, its report commencing: "Bravo den Haag! Well played! zal er zeker wel in alle," etc.

It was, of course, very slowly that the finer points of the game became recognized by spectators, and a member of one of the earlier visiting sides has told how, upon making a good hit which merited applause, he was informed in a loud voice from the ring: "I will beg you to pay attention, for if anyone should be hit the game will have to be stopped." But, considering the disadvantages under which cricketers in Holland have laboured, it is surprising that such good results have been obtained. The lack of sound instruction and good wickets must have combined to form a serious handicap to advancement, and even within the last twenty-five years it could be said with truth that there was only one ground in the country—that at the Hague—which had a good mowing-machine. Fortunately, enthusiasm was most marked, and a move in the right direction was made when, in 1892, a team came over to play a series of games in Yorkshire. Several later trips have been made to this country, and although the Gentlemen of Holland have at no time been equal to meeting the Gentlemen of England on level terms, many will be able to recall with appreciation the all-round skill of Mr. C. J. Posthuma, who played not only for Dutch teams, but also for the London County Cricket Club. So far Holland's international matches have been chiefly with France and Belgium, a series of games in which their record is distinctly good. Should anyone wish to read in some detail the story of the rise of Dutch cricket, he may be recommended to obtain *Cricket*, by W. Mulier, a book of 247 pages, illustrated by the author, and published at Haarlem thirty years ago.

Belgium was accorded an early chance of taking to cricket, for the Earl of Carlisle wrote to George Selwyn from Spa on August 28, 1768: "I rise at six, am on

horseback till breakfast, play at cricket till dinner, and dance in the evening till I can scarce crawl to bed at eleven. There is a life for you!" Later—*longo intervallo*—the game was revived in the country by our Army. Colonel Basil Jackson, in his *Notes and Reminiscences of a Staff Officer*, mentions cricket being played at Brussels in 1814, whilst Captain Gordon, as quoted by Pycroft in *The Cricket Field*, said: "Some of our officers were amusing themselves on the 12th of June, 1815, in company with that devoted cricketer the Duke of Richmond, when the Duke of Wellington arrived, and shortly after came the Prince of Orange, which, of course, put a stop to our game. Though the hero of the Peninsula was not apt to let his movements be known, on this occasion he made no secret that, if he were attacked from the south, Halle would be his position, and if on the Namur side, Waterloo." For many seasons matches between Ostend and Bruges were played fairly regularly, such meetings dating back over seventy years; while 1866 saw the establishment of the old Brussels Cricket Club and the first of their meetings with Ghent. H.R.H. the Comte de Flandres and the English Ambassador were among the supporters of the Club, to which the Burgomaster presented a beautiful ground in the Bois de la Cambre. It was at Brussels that, in 1910, a Quadrangular Tournament took place between Belgium, England (an M.C.C. team), France and Holland, and the same year a Belgian team was seen in this country for the first time.

The credit of introducing the game into Denmark is generally attributed to English engineers, whilst building railways about sixty years ago, and the first club is said to have been formed at Soro. As early as 1866 an interesting booklet entitled *Haandbog i Cricket og Langbold* was published at Copenhagen, and that the game

must have been taken up with enthusiasm is evident from the fact that during the next twenty years about seventy clubs sprang up in the country. The Boldklub, of Copenhagen, has for long occupied a foremost position, whilst in Mr. Charles Buchwald Denmark has produced at least one batsman who, in his prime, was in county form. On July 3, 1904, he established a new Danish record in the shape of an innings of 187 not out, and it was somewhat remarkable that on the very same day P. Petersen should have made 178 not out for the Boldklub. Buchwald's batting that season for the Copenhagen University team (Akademisk Boldklub) was extraordinary, for his innings were 113 not out, 65 not out, 85, 187 not out, and 82—a total of 532, and an average of 266! Since the war a great impetus has been given to the game by visits from the British Army of Occupation on the Rhine, Leicester clubs, and the M.C.C. At Copenhagen, against the Leicester combination, Buchwald played an innings of 113. In 1926 Denmark helped to make cricket history by sending a team to England. Of the seven games played, one was won, three lost and three drawn.

There is evidence to suggest that Italians owed their first sight of the game to the enthusiasm of Nottinghamshire men living in the country, for the *York Courant* of August 28, 1828, informs us that a Nottingham tradesman had been asked to send "a dozen sets of cricket apparatus" to Italy, but to which district was, unfortunately, not stated. Still, we know that in December 1839 three of The World beat two of Eton by two wickets at Naples, where "the ground was kept by a party of the King's Guards, and the match created considerable interest and excitement." About a year later Frederic Tennyson, brother of the poet, wrote to

Edward FitzGerald saying that he had fought a cricket match with the crew of the *Bellerophon* on the Partheno-pæan Hills, and had "sacked" the sailors by ninety runs. FitzGerald's comment was: "Is not this pleasant?—the notion of good English blood striving in worn-out Italy. I like that such men as Frederic should be abroad; so strong, haughty and passionate. They keep up the English character abroad." Old Public Schoolmen "kept the ball rolling" in the country, and when an Oxford and Cambridge team beat "All the World" at Rome in May 1843, in a match "for five hundred scudi aside," we were informed that the game "excited the astonishment of the Romans, some of whom have termed it the game of madmen." Still, the Englishmen proved their sanity by dining together afterwards at Melgo's Hotel. Later a flourishing club was formed at Pau, the honorary secretary and leading spirit being the late Major Naylor Leyland.

If a history of the game in Turkey ever comes to be written, the period dealt with will be one of well over fifty years, and in it a foremost position will have to be given to the doings of the old Candilli Club. That organization, which used to play its matches some five miles up the Bosphorus, near the source of "The Sweet Waters of Asia," owed its inception to the Hansons, a well-known banking family. Disaster overtook the firm, however, and it is perhaps not too much to say that the British Colony, so far as their sports were concerned, never recovered from the blow. Some very fair players for the Club were to be found among the Bulgarians of the Armenian College. One of the latter, a really good bowler, became Bulgarian Postmaster-General when his country attained independence. A great impetus to the game in Constantinople was given by the visit of the Mediterranean Squadron in

1879, for seven games were played between the Fleet and the Residents. The scene of the contests, in only one of which the visitors were successful, was Moda, the ancient Chalcedon, opposite Stamboul. Sir Adam Block, an Old Christian, then aged twenty-three, scored 144 in one of the games, which was a somewhat remarkable performance considering the nature of the ground.

Lord Goschen, who was a great lover of cricket, encouraged the game whilst he was on a special mission at Constantinople from May 1880 to April 1881, and later Lord and Lady Dufferin watched various matches. At least two engravings exist to recall memories of those days. That the number of players was not large, however, may be judged from the circumstance that, when it was desired to arrange a match between the Embassy and The World, it was discovered that only three players were available to represent the latter. Often a fair sprinkling of Turks would be on the ground, and it was an impressive sight when, as sunset drew nigh, the followers of Mahomet knelt down and, turning towards Mecca, lifted up the evening prayer of the Prophet and prostrated themselves on the earth. For some years a league was in existence, composed of Constantinople, Moda, Bebek and Therapia, and more than once matches were played between Constantinople and Odessa. The Turks themselves, it is to be feared, prefer football to cricket, but there was one notable exception, for the Mollah of the Candelli Mosque used to play regularly and became fairly expert. Another Turk, a naval officer, aroused suspicion by playing with Europeans, and was denounced to the authorities as a spy. In June 1901, during a pick-up match, he was arrested by cavalry and either imprisoned or transported. He refused to surrender,

however, until he had finished his innings, so the cavalry stood by until he was bowled and then carried him off. One feels that he deserved a better fate. One Sultan at least actually witnessed a match. The fortunate sovereign was Abdul Aziz, who, after watching some English officers at play, remarked: "Wonderful, wonderful! What exertion the game requires! But why don't you make your servants do all this?"—a point of view very similar to that expressed to Mr. R. A. FitzGerald in Paris. What was claimed to be the first match ever played in Macedonia took place, under war time conditions, in June 1916. It was between the Lothian and Border Horse (55) and 81st Brigade Field Ambulance (27 and 11). The bats were made on the field of play, and the ball, correct as to size, weight and shape, was fashioned by an Army saddler.

Of cricket in Greece itself there are only occasional traces, but in Corfu, especially during the British protectorate (1815–63), many good matches have been played. Inter-regimental games were frequent, but of more note were the meetings between the Fleet and a combined Garrison team. In later years the Greeks there took kindly to the game, and in 1891 an English cricketer, whilst staying in the island, played in one match in which he found himself without a fellow-countryman on either side. All the expressions used were English, such as "Well played!" "Well bowled!" etc., but in the score-sheet "bowled," "caught," "stumped," etc., were entered in Greek. The Greeks were good fieldsmen and were keen enough to practise every afternoon.

Russia is a country one does not associate readily with cricket, and probably many will be surprised to hear that at least three Tsars have been acquainted with the game. In 1814, "upon the glorious termination

of the war in Belgium," Alexander I, with George III and Blücher, watched a game played by Eton boys at Frogmore. Some years later Nicholas I attended a match on Chatham Lines, and, taking up a ball which had fallen near him, said to the Colonel: "I don't wonder at the courage of you English, when you teach your children to play with cannon-balls"; while the late Nicholas II not only took a keen interest in the game, but actually had a cricket-pitch in the grounds of the Imperial Palace at Peterhof. Even over sixty years ago there were certainly two clubs in the Russian capital, the St. Petersburg and the Alexandrossky, but the grounds were very rough and extras often headed the score. For years Island *v.* Town, or Left *v.* Right Bank of the Neva, was an annual match, at times played in intense heat.

An amusing story used to be told at Oxford of a wealthy young Russian of Merton College who was invited to play in a Myrmidon match, and was advised to provide himself with the necessary implements. Determined to do the thing thoroughly, he betook himself to London and ordered, besides other things, a bat, pads, gloves, wicket-keeping gauntlets, stumps, bails, a cap, a belt (with a brass cricketer on the buckle), a bag, a score-book for a hundred matches, a ball, and—a large tent. He had the reputation of being an excellent sportsman.

When the first game was played in St. Petersburg the ground was surrounded by troops, as the authorities were uncertain of the nature of the proposed display. In *Scores and Biographies* is to be found an amusing account of a match in the capital between the English Residents and the Royal Yacht *Osborne*, on the Cadet Corps ground, in 1875. "Great astonishment was created in the minds of the natives by the performances

of some fifty bluejackets from the Royal yacht, who, with that dauntless gallantry that always characterizes the British tar, played rounders with promiscuous cricket balls throughout the afternoon, varying the game with leap-frog and bull-baiting. A message, indeed, arrived from the *chef de police* demanding an explanation of the presence of this 'force of warriors' in the midst of the Russian Woolwich. The answer was apparently satisfactory, as the 'warriors' were allowed to depart unmolested, all evidently delighted with their day on shore." Cricket was introduced into Odessa in 1881, and the first match was attended by many Russian grandees. The practice of the game, however, was confined to Englishmen and a few Americans, and in the occasional matches with Constantinople no Russian ever took part.

Of the difficulties at times encountered in an endeavour to establish a footing for the game on foreign territory, the experience of some enthusiasts at Riga bears witness. The authorities heard that a cricket club had been started, and, evolving from the red-tape-bound consciousness the idea that the game was dangerous, sent a policeman to observe and report. Now the policeman was conscientious, and, being desirous to see the game as thoroughly as possible, he insisted on standing among the players. The result was that he joined in it unconsciously—that is, he fielded a ball with his head, and, his skull being rather softer than a swift-flying cricket ball, he was more or less injured. This convinced the wise authorities that their views as to the dangers of cricket were well founded, and the game was forbidden by order of the municipality.

More curious still was what happened when the students of St. Petersburg determined to master the intricacies of the game. All might have proceeded

satisfactorily if the person entrusted to translate the laws of cricket into Russian had performed the task correctly. He blundered sadly, however, and, as a result, the wickets were placed only twelve feet apart, while no fielder was allowed to approach within forty feet of the batsmen. The consequences were peculiar. Russia made a cricket record at its very first attempt, and a batsman scored a hundred runs in ten minutes, for the obvious reason that he had practically only to jump out and in of his ground to score a run. While he scored, however, the batsman at the other end had a lively and dangerous time of it. He got none of the bowling but plenty of the ball, for not only was he hit all over his person, but the rule as to both batsmen running at once was ignored, either as a useless waste of energy or through some oversight on the part of the interpreter.

Before leaving the subject of Russia, it may prove of interest to relate the details of a visit paid to that country by a cricketer about a hundred years ago. The man referred to was Thomas Kington, who was a good player whilst at Eton and one of the "cocks of the school." His name will be found in the Eton School Lists for 1811, with this note attached to it: "Was son of a Bristol merchant, of Carlton House, Somerset. Died suddenly."

Whilst still a young man he decided to visit the Continent, but, far from making the grand tour in a mechanical way, he resolved to go to Russia, a country then far less accessible than it afterwards became. Upon arriving at St. Petersburg, he asked the English Vice-Consul if he could see the Emperor, and was told that possibly an interview could be arranged if he called at the Palace and left his name. That was enough for the ambitious tourist, who, upon arriving at the

porter's lodge, instead of entering his name in the book, gave in his card, on which was inscribed in large characters, "Mr. Kington, Carlton House." To the great surprise of the cricketer, one of the equerries of the Emperor drove to his hotel the next day bearing an invitation for him to dine with His Majesty that evening.

Kington, though naturally surprised at the deference shown him, accepted, and upon arriving at the Palace was ushered into the Imperial presence. The Emperor treated him as an equal, and, speaking perfect English, asked him many questions about London. Dinner was served to a brilliant assembly of ladies of the highest rank, noblemen and officers in uniform, etc.; but what astonished the traveller, when the conversation became general, was the constant allusion to "Carlton House" and the Prince of Wales. His own remarks on this topic were evidently not deemed satisfactory, and at last the Emperor himself remarked in French to one of the ladies, "He is evidently a natural son of the Prince of Wales, or he would not be so shy." This opinion was afterwards repeated to poor Kington by the lady, who asked if it represented the true facts of the case. The cricketer at once realized that he had come to the Palace under false colours, and, with thoughts of Cossacks, knouts and Siberia flashing through his mind, he fled, and, bribing the landlord of his hotel, was eventually able to secure a berth in a vessel bound for England. When on board, he exclaimed, "Thank God I am saved! Never, never will I trust myself in a foreign country again!" He regarded his adventure as a tragedy, and died soon after he reached home.

It seems strange to recall how readily cricket was taken to by the inhabitants of the Kola Peninsula.

Home-made bats and balls were used, and a six-aside single-wicket match was played between C.I. (16 and 14) and All Lapland (18 and 0). The full score survives, and we are informed that the girls retired, reducing the strength of each side! "The match was attended from beginning to end with shouts of '*Horosho!*' '*Horosho igrali!*' 'Good!' 'Well played!' and loud laughter. Heads were out of every window: *moujiks* and women were grinning from ear to ear at each hit or blunder. When the result was made known there was cheering such as Kola had probably never heard before. Thus was *Angelskaya igra* introduced into Russian Lapland. It might have been the introduction of a Constitution, to judge by the popular enthusiasm. In an hour or two, after everybody had dispersed and gone to bed—that is, at one o'clock in the morning—our attention was directed to a noise in front of our windows. The members of the late C.I. and All Lapland Elevens were engaged in another single-wicket match. Unable to sleep, they had got up to plunge again into the fascinating game. They appointed captains, chose sides and played as well without us as with us. Now and then a difficult question arose, and they detained me at the open window for appeal as umpire. Cricket has become the rage in the White Sea Peninsula."

It was in 1866 that the first effort was made to acclimatize cricket in Scandinavia. In April that year the Christiania Cricket Club was formed, and, meeting the British residents twice, was successful in both games. The return match produced an acrobatic performance to which there can be few parallels, for, in making a catch, "Mr. Clegg pitched on his head, and stood so, ball in hand and heels in air." With what joy would such an event at Lord's be hailed by present-day caricaturists!

The first Swiss to become acquainted with cricket was César de Saussure, who paid two visits to England in the first half of the eighteenth century, and referred to the game in his *Lettres et Voyages* (p. 299). But many years were to pass before cricket made any headway in his own country. It was not until 1850 that John Rankin, for many years Honorary Secretary of the Wandsworth Private Cricket Club, founded a club at Geneva known as the British and Geneva Cricket Club, and became its first President. The club flourished, and more than once played matches with Lyons. Mr. Andrew Lang claimed, but erroneously, to have introduced the game into Switzerland. He certainly played it many times there in light-hearted fashion, and was fond of recalling a game in the market-place of Zug, with a camp-stool for wicket, which came to a sudden termination owing to a tremendous slog over the bowler's head sending the ball through the Burgomaster's window.

II. Asia.

Cricket in Persia has been known for at least seventy years, but it can hardly be said that the game there has flourished. Matches at Bushire, however, date back as far as 1856, when the British seized the town in the war respecting Herat. Although the Expeditionary Force found it necessary to bore holes for the stumps in a large flat rock, and to field in deep sand under a burning sun, they enjoyed their games. Since then cricket has been played there by the local Gymkhana, the I.E. Government Telegraphists, and teams of men-o'-war visiting the Gulf.

When was the first game played in India? The *Pioneer* of Allahabad of June 19 1872, stated that a

hat-trick had been performed in 1743, but neither authority nor detail was given, so it is impossible for the feat to be verified. Even if that incident is rejected, however, the historian of Indian cricket will have no difficulty in tracing the game back to the century before last. There was, for instance, a Calcutta Cricket Club as early as 1792, for in that year it challened Barrackpore and Dum-Dum; while five years later we come across the full score of a match at Bombay between the Military and the Island. Army cricket has, in fact, been a delightfully prominent feature of the game in India ever since, and it would be difficult to exaggerate the part played by it in its development and popularity. In Calcutta, cricket has been played both long and continuously, and as far back as 1840 it was said of the club's ground: "On the cricket arena stand two spacious tents, not, however, like the paltry affairs bearing that name in England, but lined with fancy chintz, furnished with looking-glasses, sofas and chairs, and each player's wants, whether it be a light for his cigar, iced soda-water or champagne, supplied by his turbaned attendant." It was in Calcutta that the first recorded individual three-figure innings in India was played. The score referred to was one of 102 by Robert Vansittart, for Etonians *v.* Others (of the Bengal Civil Service) in January 1804.

The Parsis began to take to the game in 1848, in which year they established the Oriental Cricket Club, but it was not until 1861 that a Hindu was seen at the wicket. The first Hindu club, the Bombay Union, was formed in 1866, and about a year later round-arm bowling began to supersede underhand among the natives. In 1877 the first of the long series of meetings between the Parsis and Bombay Gymkhana took place, and in the following season a Parsi took a professional

engagement for the first time, M. Framji accepting employment with the Calcutta Gymkhana. In 1883 the first Mohammedan Cricket Club, which blossomed into the Mohammedan Gymkhana in 1893, was established, and in 1885 the Parsi Gymkhana of Bombay was formed. Parsi teams, by the way, visited England in 1886 and 1888, and in 1911 an All India side came over. It was not until 1889–90 that the first English tour, under Mr. G. F. Vernon, was made through India. The Parsis *v.* Bombay Presidency match dates back to 1892, and the Triangular Tournament in Bombay to 1907. The latter developed into a Quadrangular Tournament, the Mohammedans joining the Presidency, Parsis and Hindus.

The late Canon Ainger on at least one occasion was responsible for a cricket limerick, and as it is not as well known as it deserves, and, moreover, refers to the game in India, its inclusion here may be justified:

There was an old man of Bengal
Who purchased a bat and a ball,
Some gloves, and some pads—
It was one of his fads—
For he never played cricket at all!

It is not known generally that the late Amir of Afghanistan was fond of cricket. He cultivated slogging and often practised for a few hours on end on a specially prepared pitch at Kabul. He would order eleven of his courtiers to take the field, ostensibly to test his skill, but woe to the unlucky man who bowled or caught him, for it was not considered etiquette or good policy to send him balls which gave him no chance of slogging. It must have been amusing, to anyone acquainted with the game, to watch the efforts of the bowlers to keep the ball just the ideal distance from the wicket. It seems very likely that the game was

introduced into the country by Mr. Godfrey Vigne, of the Harrow Eleven of 1818, who was not only one of the first Englishmen to visit Kabul, but was an honoured guest there of Ranjit Sing. That was in 1836. In the volume he wrote describing his travels, Vigne made no reference to the game, however; but in it he perpetrated a kind of "bull," for which he was destined to much chaff from his friends, for, after describing a remarkable breed of oxen peculiar to the country, he added: "These are the animals from which the inhabitants get their milk."

Perhaps no country owes more to our Navy and Army, so far as cricket is concerned, than China, for wherever our Fleet has been represented or our soldiers quartered there, almost as a matter of course has the game been played. Thus we find matches taking place at Hong-Kong in 1840, although the Hong-Kong Cricket Club was not actually formed until 1851. About the same period, too, meetings between the Navy and Garrison at Chusan were arranged, that place being occupied by British troops in 1841 and held until payment had been made of the indemnity fixed by the Treaty of Nanking. This readiness to adapt themselves to conditions, whatever they may be, was brought somewhat prominently to the fore when Prince Henry of Prussia visited Kiao Chow, Port Arthur and Wei-hai-wei on a German warship. He observed to an Englishman that at Kiao Chow he saw thousands of coolies putting up fortifications. At Port Arthur he saw tens of thousands engaged in the same operation. At Wei-hai-wei all that he saw taking place was two British officers laying out a cricket pitch. "The world is yours," he is said to have added.

Matches between Hong-Kong and Shanghai date back to 1866; those between China and Japan to

1893. Although the former fixture thus boasts considerable antiquity, there was a hiatus from 1868 to 1889, and another of five years following the loss of the Hong-Kong team in the *Bokhara* in 1892. The Chinese themselves did not take readily to cricket, and when they announced their intention of giving an exhibition of the game near Shanghai many of the English residents were much interested. "When the game began all the fielders were gathered together in a bunch, and the gabble was deafening. The bowler gave his first bowl. When the ball was thrown a long string was attached to it, the end of which was secured to the bowler's thumb. Of course, the ball could traverse only the length of the string, thereby avoiding the necessity of any long-fielder, and only two runs in all the play were accomplished. The English laugh became unlimited, but the poor Chinese looked much abashed and foolish, for they evidently expected to be praised for their ingenuity in saving bodily exertion." In April 1887, eleven Chinese had the temerity to challenge the Georgetown Cricket Club, of British Guiana, and were beaten by an innings and 107 runs, their totals being 20 and 23 against 150 for no wicket. Since those days, however, much has happened, and for years past there have been several Chinese cricket clubs in Hong-Kong, and teams have been selected from time to time to go to Singapore, Manila and Shanghai to play against local sides.

Cricket seems to have been introduced into Ceylon by Englishmen who settled in the island as tea and coffee planters about sixty-five years ago, and it was not long before it established itself there firmly. Matches between Dimbula and Dikoya go back to 1870, and—a red-letter mark in the annals of Ceylonese cricket—the Colombo Colts' Cricket Club was formed

in August 1873. The natives took to the game most readily, and there have been some who would probably have proved useful in first-class cricket. It was a splendid thing for the game that many players of note settled there and kept up their cricket, among them being Messrs. B. Pauncefote, P. F. Hadow, F. L. Shand, Ashley Walker, A. O. Whiting, G. Thornton, V. F. S. Crawford, P. R. May and W. T. Greswell. Representative English and Australian teams have played in Ceylon, as well as sides from Madras and the Straits Settlements, and also the Rev. E. F. Waddy's team. On the other hand, Ceylon has visited Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, the Straits Settlements and Burmah, and in both Singapore and Calcutta have taken part in Triangular Tournaments. The game in the island has flourished exceedingly, and the organizers there have a reputation for enterprise and thoroughness which is fully merited.

Reference to Burmah invites mention of the fact that cricket of a kind was played there in 1824, when British troops took Rangoon. Subsequently, there was much military cricket in the country, and even King Thebaw came partly under the fascination of the game. In 1869 and 1870 he and eight of his brothers were at a school at Mandalay kept by Dr. Marles, a well-known missionary, and whilst there he batted fairly well, but refused to do his share of fielding, and was in the habit of using very injurious language to anyone who bowled him. Many Burmans have taken kindly to the game, but there have been times when it was dangerous to play. Major Wynyard recalls it being necessary to have outposts put all round before the game commenced, "otherwise there would speedily have been an end of us and the match."

The game in the Straits Settlements can be traced

back to October 1852, when a picked side, which scored 11 and 1, played the Singapore Club, who made 14 and 12. There were six players in one team and nine in the other. From such small beginnings cricket in Singapore, without ever becoming particularly noteworthy, certainly attained a very useful standard of excellence. Singapore has always been the chief centre of the game in the Settlements, and the first important event in its annals was when, during the season of 1890–1, teams arrived from Hong-Kong and Ceylon, and a Triangular Tournament was played. The Settlements beat both visiting sides, and Ceylon beat Hong-Kong. Three years later a Straits team went to Ceylon, winning one game and drawing two. Cricket has also been played in various other districts, such as Labuan, Malacca, Penang, Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Johore.

III. Africa.

There is a tradition to the effect that cricket was played—one cannot say established—in South Africa the century before last by Charles Anguish, who had gained note as a player whilst at Eton, and who died at the Cape in May 1797 at the early age of twenty-eight. It is, however, tradition and nothing more, for, as far as one knows, no document exists actually proving that the game was introduced there by him.

But there is evidence that before the middle of the last century the game was popular in Cape Town, for records extant show that many good matches took place on the Wynberg ground. In one of them, in January 1842, a Mr. Tayler (B.S.C.), playing for Civilians *v.* Military, carried his bat through the innings of 186 for 110, which was high scoring for those days.

The Military made only 78 and 56, and were accordingly beaten by an innings and 52 runs. Nor was the Navy far behind, for Navy and Army *v.* Cape Town was a favourite match, and occasionally the latter also met the Officers of the Fleet and the Wynberg Club combined. The game Mother Country *v.* Colonial Born dates back over sixty years, to the season 1861–2. We have already seen that some Cape enthusiasts were responsible for transplanting their game to Utrecht as early as 1855.

As in the case of so many other places beyond the sea, South Africa owes much to the military for popularizing the game. Cricket was established in Maritzburg about 1843–4 by the 45th Foot, and Bloemfontein, some seven years later, was similarly indebted to our troops. Kaffraria followed suit in 1851–2, when more than one game was finished abruptly through the players being ordered out on patrol duty. The game was played at Potchefstroom (Transvaal) in 1860–1, and a club was formed there in 1863. Not until 1870, however, does Pretoria seem to have known the game, and, of course, Johannesburg was later still. Of cricket in Kimberley there are records dating back to 1874, though it is probable the game had been played there a few seasons earlier. A prominent date in the annals of South African cricket is 1875–6, for then it was that, at Port Elizabeth, the first Championship Bat Tournament was held for competition in the Cape Colony. A far more important event, however, was the visit of the first English team (Major Warton's) to South Africa in 1888–9, followed by the establishment in the following season of the Currie Cup Tournament. The first of the six teams to visit England came over in 1894, whilst in 1910–11 a side toured Australia. Three times, too, have Australians visited South Africa

on their way home from this country — in 1902–3, 1919–20, and 1921–2.

So far as other parts of Africa are concerned, it may be stated that at Kumassi, in 1873–4, a few games were arranged on the occasion of the visit of Sir Garnet Wolseley's expedition, and again in 1895–6, but cricket was played there in more pleasant circumstances in 1901, when there was a large crowd of now friendly Ashantis, resplendent under their gorgeous umbrellas of state. Cricket was not a new game on the Gold Coast, even in the ant-districts, forty years ago, for in 1888 the Governor, in a report of a visit he had paid to the Western District of the Colony, stated that at Axim he saw " on the village green native boys playing as vigorously at cricket as they do in England." In 1893–4 cricket was said to be " an entirely new game in Matabeleland," which, if correct, would probably make C. J. Robinson's 141 for Civilians *v.* B.S.A. Force, early in 1894, rank as the first individual hundred obtained in the country.

At Abercorn, in October 1899, the first attempt was made to establish the national game in British Central Africa. The game was between the B.S.A. Co. and the African Trans-Continental Telegraph Company, and it was played fourteen miles from the south side of Tanganyika. Owing to only three members of each Company being available at the time, both teams were completed by natives.

That the game was known in Egypt over half a century ago one may assume from the fact that Prince Hassan, the Khedive's brother, who was educated at Oxford, played for the Bullingdon Club whilst at the University. The score of at least one match in which he took part is to be found in *Scores and Biographies* (xi, 335), where he is shown as having gone in last

against the Butterflies and made ten. Of early cricket in Egypt itself, however, there are few records, but a short quotation respecting a tie-match played just outside Port Said in 1882 between A and B Companies of H.M.S. *Agincourt* and the Rest of the Camp must be made, if only to show in what perilous circumstances enthusiasts will indulge in their favourite game. "We were stationed a mile outside the town on a broad spit of sand extending from the town to a distance of about five miles, where there is a narrow channel, a hundred yards the other side of which is Fort Gim-el, held by Arabi's men. Our camp consisted entirely of bluejackets, 280 in all, every soul only too anxious to have a go at Arabi, but unfortunately we were not allowed, so had to relieve the monotony by playing cricket on the sand. The heat was too great to do anything before 4 p.m., so we were only able to have a single-innings match. The bluejackets insisted on playing barefooted, but luckily they sustained no damage except a few extra mosquito bites."

IV. North America.

Probably few followers of the game are aware that cricket in the United States can be traced back to the reign of George II, for at New York, in 1751, New York played eleven of London and won by 87 runs, scoring 81 and 86 against 43 and 37. The match was played "according to the London method," which probably meant that the laws drawn up at the Artillery Ground in 1744 were recognized. (It has been claimed that cricket took place in the same locality in the "New Amsterdam" days, but particulars have not survived.) In 1754 Annapolis played Prince George's County, and the game was certainly known in Boston by 1790, for

John Adams, then Vice-President of the United States, in advocating in the Senate a high-sounding title for the President, said that "there are presidents of fire companies and of a cricket club." Furthermore, there is extant a pamphlet, published in 1809, entitled *Bye-Laws for the Government of the Boston Cricket Club*. Ten years later, and only a few days before his death, the fourth Duke of Richmond, then Viceroy of Canada, joined in a game at Kingston with the officers of the garrison there. His Grace will, perhaps, be remembered more readily as Colonel the Hon. Charles Lennox, most enthusiastic of players and one of the chief founders of the M.C.C. in 1787.

It is doubtful if cricket was played in Philadelphia before 1831 or 1832, and then only in a perfunctory way. The game was introduced to Haverford in 1836 by an English gardener named William Carvell, who died in 1887 at the age of ninety. As clubs sprang into existence, so did the popularity of the game increase, until gradually matches came to be arranged between some of the leading clubs of Canada and the States. The Toronto Cricket Club came early to the fore in this manner, as did the St. George's and Union of New York and Philadelphia respectively. George Anthony Barber, proprietor of the *Toronto Herald*, was one of the greatest enthusiasts the Dominion has ever known, He was a good player too, and it is with satisfaction. one can add that his portrait survives him. As early as 1844 James Turner scored 120 on the Camden ground for Union Cricket Club *v.* St. George's, and thereby gained the distinction of making what is believed to have been the first century obtained in the New World. Later in the same year J. M. Sanderson, Secretary of the former club, wrote: "In a few years look out for a challenge from the Gentlemen of America

to the Gentlemen of England for a home-and-home match. You may laugh at this, but at the same time I assure you it will be done."

As to the subsequent development of the game in North America, a few facts will suffice. In 1844, at New York, Canada and the United States met in their first match, the former winning by 23 runs; in 1853 a regular professional was first engaged in Philadelphia; in 1856 took place the initial match between Eastern and Western Canada; in 1859 an English team (Parr's) went out for the first time; in 1874 the noteworthy Halifax Tournament took place; in 1878 the first Australian team went home via America, playing a few games there; in 1880 a Canadian side was seen in England for the first time; and in 1884 the Gentlemen of Philadelphia paid their first visit to this country.

Cricket in Mexico may possibly date back a full hundred years, for we know that in Mexico City in 1839 a match was played between Reds (46 and 61) and Blues (46 and 63 for seven wickets), "by the Mexican Union Cricket Club, for a farewell dinner to be given to Francis Leeson Ball, Esq., the Founder and President of the Club, on the occasion of his departure for Buenos Aires as Secretary to H.B.M. Legation." Records of the game in the country are scarce, but league matches have been played between Reforma, Pachuca, Mexico, Orizaba and Puebla, from which one may assume that cricket there has enjoyed a certain measure of popularity.

V. Central America.

From the records available it would not appear that the game in Central America was known much before 1886. In that year a cricketer who had settled in

Nicaragua wrote: "I have instituted your favourite old game, cricket, among the natives, but they are such a lazy race that half an hour of it at a spin completely does them up. I, however, wrote home to our Directors, and they immediately kindly sent the officers out a complete outfit. We call ourselves the Anglo-Nicaraguan team, and I have no doubt you would manage to put us all out in half an hour, provided you escaped from your innings alive, as the native bowling is very uncertain."

Cricket does not seem really to have flourished at any time in Central America, although in 1909 Guatemala proposed sending a team to British Honduras. The last-mentioned country has seen the game played at Belize, and has also been responsible for a pamphlet entitled *A Concise Hint and Guide to Cricket. By Isaiah Thomas.* The nature of this publication can be gauged from the following short extract: "As the order, aspect, and of attitude, on cricket presents rather a new point of view, in such an aberrant manner, I feel moved by a degree of generosity and liberality to produce this studious, profound and perfective treatise."

VI. South America.

Our Navy played an important part in popularizing the game in South America, and at Valparaiso, Rio Janeiro and elsewhere took part in many an interesting match. Thus, in the early part of 1842, the Rio Club (Brazil) beat the Officers of H.M.S. *Southampton*, although "the thermometer on the day of the match stood at 132 degrees Fahrenheit at noon." Ten years later, at Valparaiso (Chili), a couple of games were played between H.M.S. *Portland* and H.M.S. *Amphitrite*. The score of the second match is preserved, but that of the

first "mysteriously disappeared during the bottle-emptying process that followed the fight." Santiago, too, was not far behind, and both that town and Valparaiso have had the pleasure of entertaining Argentine cricketers, who were obliged to cross the Andes in order to play. Iquique also has been the scene of many a well-contested game, and in June 1891, a revolution notwithstanding, a match took place, although many of those who played had to journey by special train, a costly luxury in those parts. Shortly afterwards the town was bombarded and burnt by the insurgents, and one of the cricketers was heard to exclaim, as he saw the smoke issuing from the direction of his office at Pisagua, "There goes my best bat!" Then followed the Battle of Pisagua, which the players watched whilst sitting on a hill-side. Brazil, by the way, for a few years was able to boast a Royal supporter, for the Emperor, Dom Pedro II, and his family often watched the matches on the Rio ground with interest from a stand erected specially for their use.

Our sailors played at Georgetown over eighty years ago, and the Georgetown Cricket Club itself, the chief club in British Guiana, has been in existence for more than half a century. As far back, too, as 1865 British Guiana and Barbados met at Bridgetown, the home side winning easily.

Cricket in Paraguay has a history of about forty years, and if comparatively few games of any importance have been played there, the enthusiasm of those taking part has compensated for any such shortcomings. Support, on the whole, has been poor, even when special pains were taken to get together sides representing England and Australia. On the Plaza, at Villa Rica, in March 1894, it was said that "a crowd of about thirty collected, and the other Englishmen, numbering

about a dozen, who could not come sent their good wishes." The natives themselves appear to have been quite uninterested. It was at the very time mentioned, to wit, March 1894, that the first cricket match played in Venezuela took place. It was at Caracas, and the event was well patronized, probably because M. Santana, one of the leading merchants of the country, had been induced to give his support. In a letter respecting the game it was stated: "Of course we drank his health with musical honours, and when we struck up 'He's a jolly good fellow,' it was highly amusing to notice the look of astonishment, not unmingled with alarm, on the faces of the Venezuelans. They couldn't, of course, make head or tail of it."

In the Argentine Republic the game flourishes well, and Mr. W. E. Leach, of Lancashire, had much to do with popularizing it north of Buenos Aires. The Republic has played matches with Chili, Brazil and, in 1911–12 and during our last winter, the M.C.C. Many cricketers known in England have been associated with the game in the Argentine, among them being P. A. Foy, H. G. Garnett, J. O. Anderson, K. M. Carlisle, Gilbert Tossetti, R. F. Vibart, W. C. Millward, H. E. C. Biedermann, and C. H. Gibson. The North *v.* South matches date from 1891–2. Cricket of a kind was played in the Buenos Aires district as far back as 1806 by members of the Beresford Expedition, for in his book, *Gleanings and Remarks*, Major Alexander Gillespie mentions that he and his interned companions had time in which they "revived the national diversions of horse-racing and cricket, for which we always carried the materials." The Buenos Aires Cricket Club, the Argentine's leading cricket club, was established in 1861; at least that year is generally regarded as the date of inauguration because documentary evidence is

still extant proving that the organization was then in existence, but some people, whose opinion is entitled to respect, believe that the formation took place a short time earlier.

VII. Australia and New Zealand.

Cricket is believed to have been introduced into Australia by officers of the regiments stationed there about 1803–4, and the most prominent of the early clubs in Sydney were undoubtedly the Military and Civilian, between which rivalry was very keen. The Australian Cricket Club, of which Mr. E. W. Gregory, the grandfather of "S. E.," was a member, was only a little later in coming to the fore. The first printed account of a match seems to have been that in the *Sydney Gazette* and *New South Wales Advertiser* respecting a game on the old racecourse on New Year's Day, 1830.

The game apparently took root in New South Wales earlier than in other States, but it is worthy of mention that the Hobart Town Cricket Club, of Tasmania, was established as far back as 1832. So far as Victoria is concerned, the first wicket does not seem to have been pitched—at the foot of Batman's Hill—until about six years later. There were really a genuine bat and ball, but the stumps and bails were improvised from the ti-ti tree. During the winter the bat and ball were greased and laid up in lavender, there not being others to be had in the State! As the number of players increased, a further supply of implements had to be obtained from India and Hobart. It was on January 9, 1845, that the present Melbourne Cricket Club was "finally formed," their first ground being on the south side of the Yarra. Their present beautiful ground has

been occupied since 1854, and the Crown grant was issued in 1863.

The first known recorded game in Western Australia was between Perth and eleven Tradesmen and Mechanics of Perth, in May 1846. It was anonunced that: "The playing appears to have been fair, and the Perth Club were declared the winners."

The earliest match between North and South of Tasmania dates back to 1850, when the North won, at Oatlands, by twelve runs. In the following February the first inter-State game took place, Victoria playing Tasmania at Launceston. The match resulted from a challenge sent by Victoria in February 1850, and the meeting should have taken place a month later, but this was prevented by the gentleman deputed to forward the acceptance forgetting to post the letter in time for it to go by the steamer. The Tasmanians won by three wickets. New South Wales and Victoria did not meet until March 1856. Grounds were then far from their present state of excellence, as may be judged from the fact that, although New South Wales required only sixteen to win in the second innings, they lost seven wickets in the task. There was no grass on the ground, and all the men played with their boots off, some in their bare feet.

It is believed that a club, known as the Adelaide, existed in South Australia over eighty years ago, but records of its doings have not been preserved. Certain it is, however, that in 1846 the Kent and Sussex Club was formed by John Cocker, an old Kent player, its matches taking place at the foot of the present Stanley Street in North Adelaide. The Australia and Union Cricket Clubs were established about 1850 and 1852 respectively, and the first hundred obtained in the State was made with a cherry-wood bat. The Adelaide Oval

was formally opened in December 1873, and the first batsman to play a three-figure innings on it was the father of the brothers Hill.

In the meantime—in 1861–2—the first English team had toured Australia under H. H. Stephenson, and the interest centred in the event is evident from the first day's takings (on the Melbourne ground) in the opening match being sufficient to cover the expenses of the entire trip. It was not until 1878 that the first Australian team visited England. The Sheffield Shield Competition was inaugurated in 1892–3.

It has been stated on good authority that the first cricket match in New Zealand was played at Russell (Bay of Islands) in 1842, and that Wellington, Dunedin and Christchurch followed in the order named. There must have been some keen enthusiasts among the early settlers, seeing that, although Otago was not founded until 1848, the following appeared in the *Otago News* of the following December: "The cricket players of Dunedin publicly challenge the Cricket Club at Wellington to a trial of skill at any point equidistant between the Port of Otago and Port Nicholson." The challenge was not accepted, and the first inter-Provincial match was between Wellington and Auckland, at Wellington, in March 1860. Parr's England team of 1863–4 visited New Zealand, and gave a great fillip to the game, and fourteen years later the first Australian side to come over had a preliminary tour through the Dominion. Almost fifty years ago—in 1878–9—a Canterbury team paid a visit to Victoria, and, although its programme was not ambitious, the event was sufficient to prove that the spirit of enterprise was in evidence. Many teams from England and Australia, and even one from Fiji, have been seen in New Zealand, but this is no occasion for alluding to their doings, or to the institution

of the various inter-Provincial games. It may, however, be noted that the New Zealand Cricket Council was formed in 1895, and that the first competition for the Plunket Shield took place during the season of 1906–7.

VIII. The West Indies.

The game in the West Indies can be traced back over eighty years in several of the Islands. Thus, the Cricket Club of the 59th Foot was formed at Antigua on New Year's Day, 1842, and played its first match on July 7th the same year against the Trinidad Cricket Club, on the Grand Savanna, Trinidad, for fifty dollars. The Regiment won by 49 runs, and it was stated to be "the first time the Trinidad Cricket Club, which is of very long standing, has been defeated." Looking through records of the Trinidad matches, it is pleasant to come across a name which is familiar wherever the game is played. Thus, in a description of a match between the Garrison and the Trinidad Cricket Club, in September 1852, we find it announced that among the three thousand persons present were Lord Harris, the Governor, and Lady Harris, respectively the father and mother of the famous Kent and England cricketer.

The military had much to do with establishing the game in Barbados, and the 7th Royal Fusiliers and the 2nd Battalion 1st Royal Regiment played a leading part in the matter. When the sides met in April 1845, it was said: "As the Royals had vanquished every eleven that had dared to play them, and as the Fusiliers had been equally successful at Gibraltar (having beaten an eleven picked from the whole Garrison with the greatest ease), this match was looked forward to with great anxiety." Cricket in Jamaica, too, can boast a very respectable antiquity, seeing that the Kingston Cricket

Club was formed as early as 1863 by a few boys who had returned there from English Public Schools. On the occasion of the Jubilee of the club, the Governor of the Island sent a telegram to King George and received a reply. It has already been recorded that what is recognized as the first West Indian Tournament took place in 1865, when a British Guiana team played Barbados at Bridgetown.

Referring to the lighter side of cricket in the Islands, it may be recalled that, when some Englishmen proposed playing in St. Kitts, Danish officers who were present inquired if the game took place on a table. It is this ignorance on the part of foreigners which often causes amusement to the investigator. Thus, when the game was about to be introduced into St. Lucia, an old French lady sent a strong protest to the *Voice of St. Lucia*. Space does not allow the letter to be quoted in full, but her opening remarks show the nature of the view she held: "On introduit dans ce pays une espèce de bataille meurtrière qu'on nomme, par une étrange perversité morale, un jeu. Il est vrai, grâce à Dieu, que ceux qui se tiennent à l'écart, courent relativement moins de risques, mais même ceux-là sont loin d'être à l'abri du danger. D'après ce que j'ai pu comprendre, ce jeu appelle, je crois, *Criquette*, se joue de la manière suivante," etc.

IX. Various Centres and Districts.

Bermuda.—Matches between the Garrison and Royal Navy can be traced back over eighty years, the former's ground having been on St. George's Island and the latter's "adjoining the Admiralty House." The Hamilton Club has long been the chief cricket organization in Bermuda, and in 1905 it played a series of seven

games in America, the tour being in a measure a return to that paid to the Islands by Philadelphia Zingari in 1891. An Australian team has played a few games in Bermuda.

Borneo.—Many Borneo natives had their first experience of the game as recently as 1921, when they took very kindly to it. They throw splendidly, but swipe at random, and find it difficult to bowl properly. When told that a man is "dead" (that is, out) they leap for joy.

Canary Islands.—The original Minute Book of the Orotava Cricket Club for the years 1826 and 1827 is still preserved, and from it many quaint facts can be gathered. For instance, the Club could boast its own doctor and apothecary. Numerous games have been played in the Canaries by officers of the Royal Navy, the Training Squadrons and the Channel Fleet. In 1899 Mr. A. T. Kemble took a team there, which played three matches and won them all.

Fiji.—Here, again, the introduction of the game was due to the Royal Navy, and Messrs. E. W. Wallington and J. S. Udal, during their official residence in the Islands, did much to develop cricket among the natives, who have attained a good standard of proficiency. Fijian teams have toured both New Zealand and Australia. In early days one tribe would challenge another, the defeated side paying ten pigs to the victors.

Gibraltar.—Both the Royal Navy and our Military have again played a prominent part here. As early as 1842 Private Thorn (of the 48th Regiment) took four wickets in five balls against the 7th Royal Fusiliers. Most of the matches were played "on the Garrison Ground, outside the North Front." The Australian team of 1890 took the field in a one-day game at Gibraltar on its way to England.

JAPAN.—For years the Fleet was chiefly responsible for matches at Yokohama and Kobé, and what is believed to have been the first game in the country was Yokohama *v.* Fleet in 1863. There was so much unrest at the time that the players had to be armed. Yokohama *v.* Kobé has long been a favourite match, and sides from Hong-Kong and Shanghai have visited Japan.

JAVA.—The Batavia Cricket Club was formed in 1844, and by its rules not more than fifteen non-British members might be elected. The matches, mostly with British men-o'-war teams, were played between May or June and Christmas, when the rainy season commences.

MALTA.—The Navy and Garrison teams have been responsible for the greater part of the cricket played here for the best part of a hundred years. Some huge scores have been made on matting, especially at Verdala and Floriana.

MANILA.—A noteworthy match, which marks the commencement of the modern history of cricket here, was that between the Residents and H.M.S. *Immortalité*, in 1898. Progress has since been made, and games have been played with Hong-Kong. Furthermore, Chinese teams from Hong-Kong have also been received, and have met local Chinese clubs. "The unwritten law of cricket in Manila," wrote Captain Sir Seymour Fortescue, R.N., in *Looking Back*, "was that enormous tumblers of iced beer should be set down and constantly refilled a foot or so behind the wicket. Of course the bowlers, wicket-keeper and batsmen, being in the immediate vicinity, had all the best of it; but when 'Over' was called the outfields, if not too lazy to cross over, had their opportunity to pay attention to the glasses." Whilst the war between America and Spain was in progress, the *Penang Gazette* recorded

that "under a blazing tropical sun, with the American fleet in the bay, a bombardment imminent, and the natives on the point of rising to massacre the whole crowd, a little game of cricket was arranged between Manila and the *Immortalité* team, and came off, too." Who would be so bold as to say after this that devotion to cricket has had nothing to do with the formation of the British character? It was Sir William Draper (1721–87), an old Etonian and active cricketer, who captured Manila, and it would be interesting to know if he could claim to be the first to pitch a wicket there.

MAURITIUS.—Naval and military men have played the leading part in the cricket here for well over half a century.

NEW GUINEA.—Port Moresby and Samari have the best teams, and the Papuans take kindly to the game. On account of the heat, "there is very little fielding done by the Europeans, as the natives do it all."

NORFOLK ISLAND.—In reporting a match played here in June 1844, *Bell's Life* stated: "When we consider that a brig from Sydney once in two months is the only cheering evidence of civilization that enlivens the monotonous existence of this handful of our gallant countrymen, we are sure it must gratify all our readers to find that the manly recreations of Winchester and Sandhurst are unforgotten in every clime, and that Englishmen, even in the midst of convicts and kangaroos, must still have their Lord's." (See also "Solomon Islands.")

ST. HELENA.—The game was introduced here by H.M. 66th, 20th and 53rd Regiments during the captivity of Napoleon. Sir Basil Jackson, who accompanied Sir Hudson Lowe, records cricket being played, and the game was also mentioned by several British officers in their letters, but their remarks were only

casual. Major Lorrequer, Lowe's secretary, says the game was one of the resources of "this damnable hole." The games were played on the Racecourse at Deadwood. Seventy-five years ago, when the St. Helena Cricket Club had been established "some years," there was a good ground at Longwood, and another at Francis Plain (about two miles from Jamestown) not quite so good. A few years ago there was, and perhaps there still is, a bat in West Brighton made from a willow-tree raised from a cutting taken by Mr. Borrer from a tree by Napoleon's grave in 1840.

Samoa.—The game seems to have been introduced here by H.M.S. *Diamond* about the year 1884, and the natives, who took to it readily, at once saw there was much room for improvement. Matches of two hundred aside took place, with four or five umpires and three batsmen at each end, the contests lasting for weeks. Work was neglected, and steps had to be taken to compel the natives to return to reason. Men who played were expelled from Church, and the King had to issue a special decree. As the latter fact has been doubted, it may be well to reproduce the actual Proclamation :

THE LAW REGARDING CRICKET.

To all the Districts of Samoa, Notice.

1. It is strictly prohibited for a village to travel and play cricket with another village.

2. It is strictly prohibited for two villages to play cricket together.

3. It is also prohibited for a village to play cricket among themselves.

4. Should any village or district fail to keep this law in any respect, they will be fined a sum not exceeding forty-five dollars, or in default be sent to jail for three months with hard labour.

Malietoa, The King of Samoa.

Residence of the King, Apia.

June 20, 1890.

This tended to produce a more reasonable state of things, and gradually the above laws were relaxed. In June 1916 a Cricket Association was formed at Apia, consisting of two white and four Samoan teams. Many of the native women hit, field and catch well.

SANDWICH ISLANDS.—There was a club at Honolulu as early as 1852, for in May that year it was beaten by eleven runs by the officers of H.M.S. *Amphitrite* "on the Plains of Hiakiki, at Little Britain, the seat of General Miller, H.M. Consul of the Islands." King Kalakaua was fond of the game, and whilst in England in 1881 was present at the Eton *v.* Harrow match, and also visited the Oval. On his return home he travelled part of the way with the Anglo-Australian team of 1881–2, and every morning called the cricketers to his cabin to hear Bates sing "The Bonny Yorkshire Lass."

SEYCHELLES ISLANDS.—Here again the Royal Navy has done good service, especially at Victoria, in Mahé, a coaling station. Matches between the Islands and various men-o'-war are the chief attraction during the season.

SOLOMON ISLANDS.—The game is reported to have spread here from Norfolk Island through the influence of Bishop Patteson, a former Eton captain, who educated some of the natives in his training school on Norfolk Island, and taught them the game. On their return to the Solomons they kept up their cricket, and in time inter-island matches were arranged. Good grounds, however, are almost unknown, the best being at Gavatu and Makambo.

SUMATRA.—The first match played at Madan Deli was between Langkat and Serdang. A Dutchman named Verhulst took fifteen wickets for 38 runs for Serdang—six for 10 and nine for 28.

TONGA.—George Tubow II, of Tonga, the last of the independent kings of the Pacific, who died in 1918, was very fond of the game, which he learned whilst at school at Auckland. His subjects devoted so much time to cricket that it was necessary to prohibit it on five or six days of the week in order to avert famine, as the plantations were deserted for the cricket field.

It would be difficult to over-estimate the importance of the part played by our Navy and Army in the development of the game.

It is, it is believed, a fact that the Colonel of every regiment is still required by military law to encourage the game. However that may be, the fact remains that in 1841 the Duke of Wellington issued an order to the effect "That where the opportunity occurs, a cricket ground and a fives court shall be formed in the vicinity of the different barracks throughout the kingdom, and that the respective games shall be encouraged by the Colonel of every regiment." Whether this has ever been repealed I am unable to say.

CHAPTER V

CHARLES DICKENS AND CRICKET

As these lines are being written Christmas is almost within hail—Christmas, a season first and foremost of brotherly love and good-fellowship, but, to many, also one associated indissolubly with the memory of Charles Dickens. To a lover of cricket it is pleasant to think that our greatest novelist had a warm regard for the best of all games, and many players who admire his writings might find a genial task in endeavouring to note his many allusions to it. Dickens himself never played, except perhaps for a few minutes at a time when quite a small boy, but he looked on at enough games to become thoroughly acquainted with its intricacies, and when at Gad's Hill arranged many matches at which he officiated as scorer.

In all his writings one reference to cricket—the match between Dingley Dell and All Muggleton—stands out beyond all others. The serious student of the game may find little in the account of that terrific combat to appeal to him: in fact, Mr. E. B. V. Christian has described it as "farce rather than history," and many other authorities have acquiesced in that opinion. It *is* farce, as it was intended to be, and those who maintain that it proves Dickens to have been almost totally unacquainted with cricket arrive at their conclusion by assuming, quite erroneously, that the ludicrous report presented was a serious attempt on the part of the novelist to give a straightforward account of the proceedings. But what are the facts?

Pickwick and his three friends constituted The

Corresponding Society of the Pickwick Club, and it was their duty "to forward, from time to time, authenticated accounts of their journeys and investigations; of their observations of character and manners; and of the whole of their adventures." One has only to recall the state of the company on their return to old Wardle's, under the influence of the "salmon," to realize how impossible it would have been for any member of it to have been able to give a detailed version of the play:

> Mr. Pickwick, with his hands in his pockets, and his hat cocked completely over one eye, was leaning against the dresser, shaking his head from side to side . . . ; old Wardle, with a highly inflamed countenance, was grasping the hand of a strange gentleman muttering protestations of eternal friendship; Mr. Winkle, supporting himself by the eight-day clock, was feebly invoking destruction upon the head of any member of the family who should suggest the propriety of his retiring for the night; and Mr. Snodgrass had sunk into a chair, with an expression of the most abject and hopeless misery that the human mind can imagine, portrayed in every lineament of his expressive face.

It should be remembered that it was probably the last-named who had been entrusted to inform the headquarters of the Club of the day's proceedings, for we are told that, at the "plain dinner," he "as usual, took a great mass of notes, which would, no doubt, have afforded most useful and valuable information, had not the burning eloquence of the words or the feverish influence of the wine made that gentleman's hand so extremely unsteady as to render his writing nearly unintelligible, and his style wholly so."

Mr. Snodgrass may have been a great poet, but he lacked some of the qualities necessary in an historian. The circumstances having been what they were, it would not have been surprising if the report of the

match had stated that Mr. Tupman jumped over the moon and the bat ran away with the stumps.[1]

Dickens, on the rare occasions on which he referred seriously to cricket, was invariably accurate and well-informed. It was only when he attributed remarks to certain of his characters that he allowed himself deliberately to use expressions which approached, if they did not actually attain, the ridiculous. Surely no one, for instance, would venture to suggest that his knowledge of the game was unsound on account of the description of the single-wicket match in the West Indies between Jingle and Colonel Sir Thomas Blazo, or of what was said during the conversation between George Nupkins, Esq., Mayor of Ipswich, and Grummer:

" ' Grummer,' said the magistrate.

" ' Your wash-up.'

" ' Is the town quiet now? '

" ' Pretty well, your wash-up,' replied Grummer. ' Pop'lar feeling has in a measure subsided, consekens o' the boys having dispersed to cricket.' "

If Dickens himself had not esteemed cricket, it is unlikely that he would have mentioned the game so frequently. One or two references, in vague terms, might have crept in, but his allusions are many and always appreciative and correctly expressed. Occasionally he uses cricket as a simile, as in *Little Dorrit*, where Ferdinand Barnacle explains to Arthur Clennam that the Circumlocution Office is " like a limited game of cricket. A field of outsiders are always going in to bowl at the Public Service, and we block the balls." Clennam asked what became of the bowlers. The airy young Barnacle replied that they " grew tired, got dead beat, got lamed, got their backs broken, died off,

[1] A very quaint footnote, too long for reproduction here, on the immortal match is to be found in Vredenski's Russian version of *Pickwick*.

gave it up, went in for other games." At other times only some implement used in the game is mentioned. Thus, in *Martin Chuzzlewit* we are told that within the offices of the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Assurance Company are "green ledgers with red backs, like strong cricket balls beaten flat." Frequently, too, travellers are made to obtain a passing glimpse of a match. Such was the good fortune, fully merited, of Tom Pinch during his journey from Salisbury to London: ". . . Yoho, beside the village green, where cricket players linger yet, and every little indentation made in the fresh grass by bat or wicket, ball or player's foot, sheds out its perfume on the night." It has been told, too, how Little Nell and her grandfather arrived in their wanderings at a village where "The men and boys were playing at cricket on the green; and, as the other folks were looking on, they wandered up and down, uncertain where to seek a humble lodging."

The above are, of course, only passing allusions to the game. Others of a similar nature may be found by the curious in *Pickwick* (chapters xliv and lii), *The Holly Tree* (Second Branch), *A Flight*, *The Old Curiosity Shop* (chapter xxv), *Martin Chuzzlewit* (chapters iv and v), *Great Expectations* (chapter xxvii), *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (chapter xvii), *The Child's Story* (twice), *A Christmas Tree*, *Bleak House* (chapter liv), *The Schoolboy's Story*, *Little Dorrit* (Book II, chapter vi) and an *Uncommercial* Paper, *Dulborough Town*.

A longer reference is to be found in *Sunday Under Three Heads*. Here Dickens, in describing his experiences of a short visit to the West of England, tells how, in a village "about seventy miles from London," he found the game being played on the Sabbath with the knowledge and approval of the minister.

I was surprised to hear the hum of voices [he writes] and occasionally a shout of merriment from the meadow beyond the churchyard; which I found, when I reached the stile, to be occasioned by a very animated game of cricket, in which the boys and young men of the place were engaged, while the females and old people were scattered about: some seated on the grass watching the progress of the game, and others sauntering about in groups of two or three, gathering little nosegays of wild roses and hedge flowers.

Then, following an introduction to a venerable man, his granddaughter, and the latter's admirer (one of the players), he continues:

I was in the very height of the pleasure which the contemplation of this scene afforded me, when I saw the old clergyman making his way towards us. I trembled for an angry interruption to the sport, and was almost on the point of crying out, to warn the cricketers of his approach; he was so close upon me, however, that I could do nothing but remain still, and anticipate the reproof that was preparing. What was my agreeable surprise to see the old gentleman standing at the stile, with his hands in his pockets, surveying the whole scene with evident satisfaction! And how dull I must have been, not to have known till my friend the grandfather (who, by-the-bye, said he had been a wonderful cricketer in his time) told me, that it was the clergyman himself who had established the whole thing: that it was his field they played in; and that it was he who had purchased stumps, bats, ball and all!

It is such scenes as this I would see near London on a Sunday evening. It is such men as this who would do more in one year to make people properly religious, cheerful and contented, than all the legislation of a century could ever accomplish.

It is to be regretted that Dickens never gave us a cricket novel, but, of course, he wrote for the general public, and those who are interested in the literature of the game are, after all, a small, if intellectual, community. It is true, as Mr. Christian says, that the Great Cricket Romance, like the Great American Novel,

is yet to come. Still, Dickens's cricketers were, for the most part, poor creatures, such as Jingle, amusing though something of a knave; Steerforth—"the best cricketer you ever saw"—brilliant but unsteady; and poor Barnaby Rudge, who played on Chigwell Green when a young boy. Mention must be made, too, of Thomas Idle, who went to a match to look on but was induced to play, with the result that he was bowled first ball and made a fool of himself in the field. It is a relief to picture the good-hearted, simple-minded Mr. Dick enjoying "blissful minutes in the cricket field" at Canterbury, and quaint to be told that young Smallweed was not a player, for one could as easily picture him keeping wicket at Lord's in an important match as Quilp or Uriah Heep, to say nothing of Miss Mowcher standing up to Richardson or Mr. Kortright on a worn wicket.

Dickens's most noteworthy record of appreciation of the game is far less known than it deserves to be. It is too long for quotation in full, but a few extracts will suffice to show in what estimation he regarded cricket:

> . . . It really places a thousand joys of life within the reach of those who, without their powers with the bat and ball, would find existence a very humdrum and monotonous affair. It acts as the social cement of classes. . . . It is no exaggeration to say . . . that more valuable acquaintances, more permanent and fruitful friendships, have been made in the cricket field than in any other social rendezvous of the United Kingdom.
>
> The cricketer's life is certainly the most purely enjoyable which any young man could lead. Is there any week in England, or in the world, like the Canterbury week? . . .

A far fuller extract, from "Athletes at Ease" in *All the Year Round*, can be found on pages 161–3 of Boyle and Scott's *Australian Cricketers' Guide* for 1880–1.

In conclusion it may be stated that, in a long letter dated Baltimore, February 11, 1868, Dickens devoted almost three pages to instructions respecting the formation and management of a cricket club, also offering to become chairman of the same, "to overlook its business affairs," and to subscribe five pounds a year towards its expenses. Surely this is proof, were any needed, that Boz had a warm corner in his heart for the best and greatest of games.

CHAPTER VI

SOME NOTES ON OLD-TIME CRICKET

It is only a few seasons since a vigorous crusade was carried on against the use of bats exceeding the statute width. (In one match, at the Oval, a player was twice sent back from the wicket before he was allowed to commence his innings owing to the fact that the bats with which he appeared did not satisfy the requirements of the gauge.) Supervision has not been so strict recently as it was just about that time, yet if Law 5 is to be respected every effort should be made to prevent it from being violated, for it is a well-known fact that many a bat which will pass the gauge before a long score has been obtained with it will not do so afterwards. In the oldest laws of cricket extant—those of 1744—nothing is said concerning the dimensions of the bat, a state of things which is not very surprising when it is recalled that in those far-off days the bat was shaped like a hockey-stick, and that, as probably all the bowling was fast and along the ground, the batsman, finding "a short life and a merry one" a good maxim, would not be likely to encumber himself with an unwieldy weapon. In the course of the game's development the length ball was discovered, and naturally batsmen found their old style of play rendered of little avail; hence to meet the innovation the bat with a straight pod was evolved, and it is of interest to note that the limitation in width to $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches was laid down in 1774 and has been adhered to ever since. The Hambledon Club possessed an iron gauge, by which all bats of suspected dimensions were tested, and this

interesting relic could be seen in the village until about forty years ago, when it was taken away by "a gentleman who took a fancy to it."

In some of the eighteenth-century paintings and prints the width of the blade of the bat is to be found exaggerated to an extent which is nothing less than remarkable. Morland, if one-half of the paintings attributed to him were really his, was a great offender in this respect, but as, in order to save himself trouble, he was in the habit of making several copies from the pictures he liked best, or which he considered would prove the most remunerative, it was only natural that a mistake, once made and not detected immediately, should be repeated time after time. But much may be forgiven so great a genius, even by the historian, especially when it is remembered that a great deal of his work was accomplished at high pressure and under conditions which, to say the least, were not conducive to accuracy in detail. One of his representations of cricket was painted at the Cricketers' Inn, Chertsey, in interesting though characteristic circumstances. Being presented by the landlord with a bill at a decidedly inopportune moment, he bolted himself in his bedroom and on one of the sheets painted a scene of a match in progress, and in this manner liquidated the debt.

The introduction of the third stump was not long in following the change in shape of the bat. During a single-wicket match between Five of Hambledon and Five of England in the Artillery Ground, London, on May 22, 1775, John Small went in last man to get fourteen runs, and obtained them—in two hours and three-quarters. At the conclusion of the match the Duke of Dorset, being desirous of complimenting the batsman on his skill, made him a present of a fine

violin. It was noticed, however, that Lumpy, the player who

> . . . did allow
> He ne'er could pitch but o'er a brow,

on three occasions bowled right through Small's wicket, and as this was considered very hard on the bowler the innovation mentioned was decided upon. In some quarters it was thought that the game would thereby be shortened, but it was rightly argued that the batsman, knowing the danger there would be in missing a straight ball with three stumps instead of two behind him, would redouble his care and his innings be better played. The introduction of this improvement was not effected at once, but the accounts which state that it was delayed until 1780 are certainly incorrect, for it was expressly recorded that in the match on the Laleham Burway ground, Chertsey, between Chertsey and Coulsdon, on Thursday, September 6, 1776, the wicket consisted of three stumps and two bails. Furthermore, the *Hampshire Chronicle* of September 7, 1776, announced that: "Another match of cricket will be played on Broad-Halfpenny Down, at Hambledon, on Monday, five of a-side, after a new plan, when they are to have three stumps instead of two, in order to shorten the game." The score of the game has not been preserved, but the experiment evidently gave satisfaction, for in the following June a wicket of three stumps was used in the chief match of the year—Hambledon *v.* England—when James Aylward played his historic innings of 167 and Hambledon scored 403 and won by an innings and 168 runs.

When the incident which caused the innovation occurred, Small was beyond dispute the finest batsman in the country, and it is probable that had it involved

any other player the alteration would not have been effected as soon as it was. It is a tribute to Small's skill that, although the shape of the bat was changed and the third stump added to the wicket whilst he was in his prime, and he was thereby compelled entirely to change his mode of play, he maintained his reputation. One can imagine the disappointment of Lumpy on that May afternoon, for Small was seldom clean bowled. In a report of the match between Hambledon and England at Bishopsbourne Paddock in August 1772, it was stated that "Lumpy had the honour of bowling out Small, which had not been done for some years." In connection with his skill an amusing anecdote may be told. The great player was always accompanied to the important matches by his wife, who had a belief that if she did not attend the Hambledonians would suffer defeat. She always made her appearance with a green umbrella of enormous dimensions, which she would flourish excitedly in order to signal her husband's every hit, shouting the while, "Run, man, run! you'll be out!"

It is not a little remarkable that, whereas much attention has been given to the dimensions of the bat and the wicket, the law-makers have never, except until quite recently, considered it necessary or even advisable to deal with the question of the weight of the bails. In the early days of the game, when the wicket contained only two stumps, there was, of course, but a single bail, and for very many years following the introduction of the third stump the two bails to surmount each wicket were invariably supplied by the manufacturers in one piece, which the cricketers or umpires were left to divide. The operation was generally effected by means of a more or less haphazard snap, the consequence being that quite as often

as not the two ends which rested on the middle stump were splintered. This circumstance, and the fact that the bails were generally lavishly coated with varnish, which would melt in the sun, often enabled a batsman to continue his innings when, having received from the bowler a ball which beat him, he had the satisfaction of seeing it strike the wicket without causing a bail to be dislodged. In order to guard against such an occurrence, some old cricketers—the late Mr. Fred Gale was of the number—made a point of diving the projecting ends of the bails into the ground, the intention being that they should, by possessing a light covering of earth, be made as impervious as possible to the sun's rays. Other persons overcame the difficulty by providing bails of india-rubber, which could be trusted to respond satisfactorily when one of the stumps was struck. Nowadays it seldom happens that the projecting ends are varnished, and therefore a difficulty —not a particularly serious one, it must be acknowledged—with which our fathers had to contend has been removed. On a few occasions the question has arisen, "What course should be pursued when, owing to the force of the wind, the bails cannot be maintained in position?" The annals of first-class cricket provide two solutions: the one, to dispense with them entirely; the other, to use iron bails. At Scarborough some of the latter are always held in readiness, and they have been requisitioned in more than one Festival.

It is strange that no detailed account has been handed down to us of the costume worn by the chief exponents of the game almost two hundred years ago, for the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cumberland ("Butcher") and many noblemen frequently arranged great eleven-a-side matches, and it is difficult to believe that the

players, who belonged almost wholly to the working classes, would have been allowed to perform before the greatest people in the land in any dress they might choose. James Love refers to the matter with irritating brevity and vagueness. "The robust CRICKETER," says he, "plays in his shirt. The Rev. Mr. W——d, particularly, appears almost naked." Not much information is vouchsafed the cricket historian here, but a later poet shows more plainly what was the costume affected by the Winchester collegians in 1764, in the lines:

> Cricket, nimble boy and light,
> In slippers red and drawers white.

It is probable that, so far as costume is concerned, present-day cricket compares as favourably with that of the past as in any other respect. The modern dress may not be so picturesque as the old, but that it is appropriate to the requirements of the time probably none will be found to question. From an artistic point of view there is much to be said in favour of the light blue uniform affected by the M.C.C. in the eighteenth century, and the Hambledon players, who were dressed in sky-blue coats, with black velvet collars, and "C.C." (Cricketing Club) engraved on their buttons, must have presented a pleasing sight in the field, especially as their dress was completed with knee breeches, silk stockings, silver-buckled shoes, and velvet caps. It is not difficult to imagine what a sensation would be caused if the Kent team entered the field at Canterbury so attired; the novelty would in all probability cause such a rush, especially of caricaturists, that the receipts would prove enormous even for that particular side. (Perhaps the committees of those clubs which have experienced a heavy loss

recently will consider the advisability of acting upon the suggestion.)

When the M.C.C. discarded their light blue uniform cannot be said. Probably its use was discontinued gradually, for neither the Annual Reports nor the Minutes contain any reference to the matter. Sir Spencer Ponsonby-Fane has left it on record that: "The red and yellow colours of M.C.C. were adopted by FitzGerald during his secretaryship. I Zingari were the first club to make use of colours—the gipsy black, red and gold—and we were annoyed when FitzGerald started red and yellow for M.C.C., which, on a black hat, resembled ours." Ribbons of particular colours seem first to have been used on the cricket field by lady players: that was in the middle of the eighteenth century. A little later cricketers engaged by the chief promoters of the game donned the colours of their leader; thus the players in the service of the Earl of Winchilsea always wore hats with gold binding and ribbons of particular colour. From an old print entitled "Oxfordshire Cricket Club, 1787," one can easily imagine how dandified the gentlemen players must have appeared in their neat shoes, silk stockings, knee-breeches, and silk-ruffled shirts. The late Lord Charles J. F. Russell could well remember Lord Frederick Beauclerk in nankeen breeches and white silk stockings, with another pair drawn tight over the instep, a scarlet sash round his waist, and a white beaver hat, which he would dash on the ground if things did not go to his liking.

The tall hat, the greatest monstrosity which was ever permitted to disfigure a cricket ground, was in vogue for some decades during the first half of the nineteenth century, but during that period sportsmen rowed, ran, shot and perhaps even slept in tall hats.

CRICKET.

A GRAND MATCH WILL BE PLAYED

In LORD's CRICKET GROUND,

St. MARY-LE-BONE,

ON MONDAY JUNE THE 28th. 1819, AND THE FOLLOWING DAY, BETWEEN THE COUNTY OF HANTS AGAINST ENGLAND.

For One Thousand Guineas a Side.

The WICKET to be Pitched at ELEVEN o'Clock.

PLAYERS,

HANTS.	*ENGLAND.*
W. WARD Esq.	E. H. BUDD Esq.
J. MILLS Esq.	J. BRAND Esq.
T. PRICE Esq.	E. AISLABIE Esq.
— HOWARD	— BELDHAM
— THUMWOOD	— SHEARMAN
— THUMWOOD	— SHEARMAN
— BEGLEY	G. WELLS
— BENNETT	— SPARKES
— HOLLOWAY	— POWELL
— BROWN	— OTWAY
— LILLEYWHITE.	— SLATER.

ADMITTANCE SIX PENCE, GOOD STABLING on the GROUND.

The Cricket Laws, BATS, BALLS, and STUMPS to be had at the Ground or at Mr. LORD's HOUSE in Upper Gloster Street.— NO DOGS ADMITTED.

A GOOD ORDINARY AT HALF PAST THREE.

Croft, Printer, Wells-Street, Oxford-St.

A CRICKET "BILL" OF 1819

"Gentlemen," the faithful chroniclers of cricket have recorded, "wore white hats," but, being ridiculed and called postboys, discontinued the fashion. About thirty years ago the writer visited a famous old cricketer, then an octogenarian, and was amused to find his sitting-room floor ornamented with about a dozen of the high hats the old man had worn in his younger days when participating in great matches. Each hat, too, did duty for some particular purpose: one contained three or four long churchwarden pipes, another was converted into a paper-basket, a third contained letters received from cricketing friends, and two or three made excellent flower-pots.

Later came the era, to recall which one need not have reached the age of threescore years and ten, of round hats, still termed "bowlers," with which one almost naturally associates spotted and striped shirts. It was the last named which excited the wrath of Mr. Fred Gale. "Do not be a zebra; it is low," he wrote, and the sight of a scratch twenty-two attired in all the colours of the rainbow taking the field against the A.E.E., or another of the hydra-headed E.'s, was almost painful to the eyes. The spotted shirt enjoyed a long reign, and had not disappeared from county cricket by so recent a date as 1880. For many seasons the Oxford and Cambridge teams wore shirts of dark and light blue respectively. The former's colours originated with Charles Wordsworth and Tom Garnier, afterwards Bishop of St. Andrews and Dean of Lincoln respectively. Both were in the Oxford boat of 1829, and, discussing what uniform should be worn by the crew, chose the Christ Church guernsey (four of the members belonging to the House), only with a broader and darker stripe. Hence the origin of "dark blue," which was almost immediately afterwards adopted for

the eleven. Cambridge obtained their colours, first pink and then light blue, from the King's Scholars and Town Boys respectively of Westminster.

Some of the cricket shirts which used to be worn, even at Lord's on the most important occasions, were startling owing to the colours they contained. The Cambridge Quidnunc colours were worn in shirts, jackets and caps, with sometimes a Quidnunc stripe down the leg of the trouser. One of the neatest of what may be called the fancy shirts was that worn by the old All England Eleven; it was white with a small red spot, or sometimes white with a narrow red stripe. Almost, if not quite, the last member of either University eleven to enter the field at Lord's in a coloured—a Harlequin—shirt was Mr. Russell Walker; as he also wore a pot-hat one can believe the report which stated that his appearance created almost a sensation. Scarcely less excitement was caused when, ten or a dozen years later, Mr. H. M. Sims fielded for Yorkshire at Bramall Lane attired in his Cambridge blazer. His appearance was by no means to the taste of the outspoken Sheffield crowd, which advised him in stentorian tones to "Tak' off thi shirt!" The banter was thoroughly good-natured, though disconcerting, and it was in all probability on the latter account that the fieldsman when at length a catch came to him dropped it. There was a death-like silence for a couple of seconds, and then the crowd bayed in unison, though not in so good-humoured a way as before: "*Nah* will thee tak' off thi shirt?" Sims was then a stranger to the frequenters of Bramall Lane, but it was not long ere Yorkshire crowds, recognizing his worth both as cricketer and as man, took him to their hearts, light blue blazer and all.

How many cricketers and followers of the game who frequently refer to "blazers" are aware of the

derivation of the word? About sixty years ago, when flannel coats of club colours first came to be used, the coat adopted by the Eleven and Eight of Magdalen College, Oxford, was scarlet, trimmed with blue silk. The conspicuous colours, which could be seen "a mile off," naturally created a sensation; and it was a Balliol man who first gave them the very appropriate name of "Magdalen blazers." Since then the name has been used for coloured coats of all descriptions, however subdued their hue. That is one version of the introduction of the term. There is another—the late Professor Skeat's—to the effect that it arose from the bright red jackets of the boat club of St. John's College, Cambridge, which were called "Johnian blazers." Cricket jackets, however, were known much earlier. One such, with three buttons in front, is shown well in the portrait of Richard Letby, of York (1809–82), while in *Ellen and George; or the Game at Cricket*, a book of sixty pages published in 1829, reference is to be found to a "white jacket trimmed with blue." In the frontispiece, as in the portrait mentioned, the jacket is shown as not extending below the waist. Miss Mitford, too, writing to R. B. Haydon six years earlier, referred to "a cricketing jacket," which, even then, was far indeed from being an innovation.

Spikes for the shoes were initiated about the year 1800 by Robert Robinson ("Long Bob"), a Surrey man, who made them a monstrous length. The same cricketer was the first to don leg-guards. These latter he placed angle-wise, and the ball went off so clean and with so much noise that he was laughed out of his invention. About 1827 Daniel Day, another Surrey worthy, became patentee of the tubular guard-gloves, and they were first manufactured at the india-rubber factory of Mr. Wilson, at Streatham.

The first recorded occasion upon which an umpire was invested with a white garment was in a match between the United All England Eleven and Sixteen Free Foresters, in 1861, "Armitstead complaining that he could not see Atkinson's hand against the body of the umpire." The long white robe was not donned by Australian umpires until November 1887, in the match at Melbourne between Victoria and Mr. G. F. Vernon's England Team. The *Melbourne Punch* published a most amusing caricature of the two officials (back view), with the accompanying letterpress: "Oh dear, no. These are not the famous Christy Minstrel brothers, by any means. They are Cricket Umpires in their new English uniforms. This is the sort of thing to revive cricket. (So near the 5th of November, too.)" Nowadays Australian umpires, unlike their English brethren, wear short white jackets, extending only a few inches below the waist.

CHAPTER VII

CRICKET BATS

—A handsome bat he held,
On which he leaned as one of eld.

SPENSER.

So slides he down upon his grainèd bat.
A Lover's Complaint, verse 10, line 1.

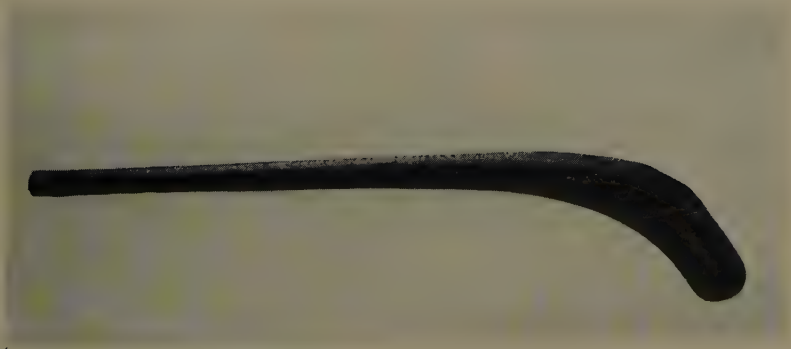
IN the early days of the game cricket bats were of an entirely different structure from what they are now. Bowling then was generally fast and all along the ground, and, in order to meet the attack, batsmen used a weapon which, in size and appearance, bore a strong resemblance to a modern hockey-stick. The bat was doubtless of the kind best calculated to oppose the bowling then in vogue, as defence in those far-distant days was an unknown art. The mode of attack and form of the bat combined to favour a short and lively innings: hence the man possessing the stoutest muscles and surest eye would generally prove the greatest run-getter.

A splendid specimen of these early bats is in the possession of the Surrey County Cricket Club, and, to an antiquary of the game, is particularly interesting as being the oldest known to exist. It was presented to the Club by Mr. F. M. Buckland, and belonged originally to Mr. John Chitty, of Knaphill. It is inscribed "J. C., 1729," and weighs two pounds four ounces. Whether Mr. Chitty was a famous player in his day it is impossible, at this distance of time, to state, for, when he flourished, scores were not preserved and newspapers

had not commenced to record the names of the players constituting even the most important teams of the day. It was this style of bat that the Rev. Henry Venn, a few days before he was ordained, in 1747, so dramatically gave away at the conclusion of a match between Surrey and England. Venn's biographer has described the incident in the following words: "When the game terminated in favour of the side on which he played, he threw down his bat, saying, 'Whoever wants a bat that has done me good service may take that, as I have no further occasion for it.' His friends inquiring the reason, he replied, 'Because I am to be ordained on Sunday, and I will never have it said of me, "Well struck, Parson!"' . . . He could never be persuaded to play any more."

In those times, as in even far later years, it was not considered becoming for the clergy to indulge in the game publicly, owing to the fact that important matches were generally advertised as being played for large sums. It is of interest to know that, about the time of Venn's renouncement of the game—and his bat, Alderman Boydell, the etcher and print-seller, had many shops, but that the best was at the sign of "The Cricket Bat" in Duke's Court, St. Martin's Lane. According to Smith's *Life of Nollekins*, this was in 1750. Whilst the game was still practically in its infancy, it was customary for each umpire to have charge of a bat during the course of a match, presumably as a sign of office. The fashion had not wholly lapsed by the commencement of the present century, for as recently as 1906 it was recorded that: "At the present time in 'small' cricket (i.e. other than Grade cricket) in Sydney many umpires won't stand unless they are given a bat so as to 'have a strike' when a wicket falls." What a barbaric custom!

THE REV. HENRY VENN



AN EARLY CRICKET BAT

It is often said, and the statement is quite true, that modern bats drive more than those used in the early days of the game. It has always been a mystery how the old players managed to make any big hits at all with the curved bats made all in one piece. At times the sting must have been most pronounced. I have one such weapon—no other term would do it justice—and often I have taken it up and placed myself in the attitude for play, and it has seemed to me that the only direction in which it could have been possible to " send her spinning a mile " would have been to leg off a ball just outside the leg stump.

That big hits were made in those far-distant days, however, we know from the records which have been preserved. Thus, in the poetical description of the Kent *v.* England match of June 1744, the great Richard Newland is made to say :

> Have I for this the *King's* wide Ramparts broke ?
> Whilst Rumney shudder'd at the mighty Stroke.

In 1765, too, Stephen Harding, of Thursley, in Surrey, whilst playing on Richmond Green for Chertsey against Richmond, made a five, two sixes and a seven in successive scoring hits—a feat which would be noteworthy even when performed with a present-day bat. (This player's great-great-grandson, by the way, was for some time my gardener, and legends of the old cricketer's prowess are still preserved in the family.)

It is a curious fact that some of the biggest hits recorded in the history of Lord's were made with bats of one piece, but by then the shape had changed from the curved variety to one straight in the pod. There was, for instance, Alexander, tenth Duke of Hamilton, who caused a mark, known as the " Duke's strike," which recorded a hit 132 yards in air, to be one of the

features of the first ground, which existed from 1787 until 1810.

As far back as 1829 G. Freemantle, playing on the present Lord's for England against Sussex, made a hit of 130 yards from hit to pitch, and seven years later, in the University match, C. W. Beauclerk (son of Lord Frederick), by a hit "square to the leg," sent a ball full-pitch on to the roof of the old Tavern. Many longer hits than these have been recorded, of course, and they are mentioned merely to prove that, their old-fashioned bats notwithstanding, some of the early batsmen were no mean adepts in the art of hitting.

The earliest known bat-maker of whom we have any record is Pett, of Sevenoaks. In *The Early Diary of Frances Burney* the following letter, written by Mrs. Rishton and dated "June ye 6th, 1773," is reproduced:

> Mrs. Rishton begs Miss Burney to buy Mr. Rishton two cricket batts made by Pett, of 7 Oaks. You will get them at any of the great toy shops, the maker's name always stamp'd upon them. Ask for the very best sort, which cost 4s. or 4s. 6d. each. Let them weigh 4 oz. and a quarter, or 4 oz. and half each. Send them by the Exeter post coach.

Mr. Rishton, according to the authority quoted, was a great cricket player, though his name does not appear in *Scores and Biographies*. The above letter is of interest, as it tells us what was the price of bats—"the very best sort"—over a hundred and fifty years ago. It is evident that the writer, a lady, should have written "lb" instead of "oz." when alluding to the matter of weight. Old John Small, of Hambledon, was also a famous early bat-maker, and he it was who was responsible for the change effected in its shape. He invented a bat straight in the pod which enabled him to make his favourite stroke, the draw, with more ease

and certainty than formerly. Over his doorway, at Petersfield, Small placed a board on which was written :

> Here lives John Small,
> Makes bats and balls,
> Pitches a wicket, plays at cricket
> With any man in England.

As being the first man to make bats with shoulders, Small, quite apart from his skill as a player, deserves an honoured place in the annals of cricket. This innovation proved exceedingly popular, and so quickly did orders come in that he was hardly able to keep pace with them. In his old age he sold his tools and knowledge of the trade to Robert Dark, of Lord's.

It is probable that many of the early players were their own manufacturers. Doubtless the bat as wide as the wicket with which " Shock " White, of Surrey, once appeared in a match at Hambledon was the result of his own handiwork. When this incident occurred there was no legal restriction as to the width of the bat, but, nevertheless, the Hambledonians meted out summary justice to the Reigate " crack," for one of them produced a knife and the bat was shaved down to reasonable proportions whilst White stood angry by. But, even with his mutilated weapon, the batsman proved successful in winning the game for his side. What have our great artists been about not to portray such an historic incident ? In consequence of White's action a gauge of the statute width, through which all bats of suspected dimensions had to pass, was constructed for the Hambledon Club, and it remained in the village for many years after the break-up of that famous body—until, in fact, modern times, when it was taken away by a gentleman (who shall be nameless) who " took a fancy to it."

On various occasions since White's day attention has been given to the width of bats used in great matches, and about sixty years ago Tom Hearne would often be found stationed at Lord's with orders to apply the gauge as each player left the pavilion for the wicket. Gradually, however, vigilance became less strict, but in November 1883 the following was published: "The attention of the Committee of the M.C.C. having been called to the fact that the bats now generally in use are larger than Law 2 authorizes, it was resolved that steps be taken for insuring a strict compliance with the law in future, and that this resolution be notified to the public and the bat-makers." Doubtless it was this publicity which gave rise to an amusing incident in which "W. G." and Percy McDonnell were the chief figures at Sheffield Park a few months later. The Champion suggested that the bats of McDonnell and Alec Bannerman should be tested, and, upon this being done, it was found that the former's was too wide. McDonnell thereupon proposed that one of "W. G.'s" should be put through the gauge, and much laughter was caused when the very first one produced would not pass muster. About twenty years later—as the result of a discussion at Lord's in May 1903, concerning a proposal to increase the size of the wicket—the M.C.C. again instructed umpires to make frequent use of the gauge. A few players, it was found, possessed weapons of slightly more than legal dimensions, and in one match at the Oval a professional was sent back twice ere he produced a bat which met the requirements of the law. More than once, too, it was found that a bat which would pass the gauge at the commencement of an innings would not do so later in the day. This is the case especially with new bats, which are more liable than old to spread.

One wishes that White's historic bat had been preserved. Like "the sceptre of delight," as Felix termed it, with which the mighty Beldham gained his numerous triumphs, it should have been accorded an abiding place at Lord's. The Rev. John Mitford, in describing a visit he paid to the illustrious batsman in the evening of his days, wrote: "Beldham still survives. He lives near Farnham, and in his kitchen, black with age, but, like himself, still untouched with worms, hangs the trophy of his victories, the delight of his youth, the exercise of his manhood and the glory of his age—his BAT. Reader, believe me when I tell you I trembled when I touched it: it seemed an act of profaneness, of violation. I pressed it to my lips, and returned it to its sanctuary." With but very few exceptions, the bats of famous early players have all perished. At Lord's, however, is an interesting collection containing, besides others, a dozen bats of the eighteenth century which belonged to the fourth Duke of Buccleuch, and the curious bat which was made specially for Robinson (born 1765), a great Surrey player, in order to fit his stunted fingers, which had been damaged seriously by fire when he was a child.

There is also one on which is written, "Ring, Little Joey, in 1792–1793 (died of cricket, lbw)." What this inscription signifies cannot now be stated with certainty, though it is known that the bat was once the property of John Ring, the Kent "crack," whose nickname, it is believed, was "Little Joey." It was this player (so Pycroft states) that Beldham declared to be the cause of the introduction of leg-before-wicket, he being "shabby enough to get his legs in the way, and take advantage of the bowlers." As, however, lbw is found mentioned in the Laws drawn up in February 1774, when Ring, who was born in 1758,

could have been but fifteen or sixteen years of age, one must conclude either that Pycroft misinterpreted the old player's remarks—which is the more probable, for Beldham, to the last, possessed a splendid memory, whilst his interviewer was far from reliable so far as dates were concerned—or that he pressed too freely on the old man that punch which would " put the souls of three weavers into one butcher." That John Ring " died of cricket," however, was, to a very great extent, true, for in 1800 his brother George was bowling to him when the ball suddenly got up and broke his nose. John was, in consequence, laid up for several weeks, and, a fever supervening, he died in October of the same year at the early age of forty-two. Amongst the other old bats to be seen at Lord's is one with " Walker 95, 86 " written upon it, it being presumably the one used by Tom Walker in the match at Canterbury in 1786 between the White Conduit Club (with six given men) and Kent, wherein he scored 95 not out and 102 for the former.

For some years after the break-up of the *true* old Hambledon Club an old-fashioned bat, once the property of a great player, was preserved at the " Bat and Ball " on Broad-Halfpenny Down as an interesting relic of the past; but one day, in 1819, *after* dinner, a man—the name of the vandal is unknown—took it down from its resting-place on the wall to have " just one hit," and, before anyone could stay his hand, rashly did so, and with disastrous consequences, for the wood, decayed and worm-eaten, was smashed into splinters.

If a cricket enthusiast desires an interesting occupation for his spare hours during the winter months, he can be recommended to try his hand at bat-making. Some players have proved quite successful in the art, and there is no reason why anyone who is willing to

devote sufficient time and thought to the matter should not do so. W. J. Lewis, who has played for Queensland, scored 173 in a good-class club match in Brisbane in October 1904 with a bat of his own manufacture, notwithstanding that it was made of a kind of willow supposed to be unsuited to the construction of bats. And in 1872 G. Gibson, of Victoria, for scoring 41 against New South Wales at Melbourne, was presented with a silver-mounted bat made from the willow of a tree grown in his own garden. (The first individual three-figure innings played in first-class cricket with a bat of Australian-grown willow was E. R. Mayne's 131 for Victoria *v.* New South Wales at Melbourne in 1919–20. The late E. J. Gregory, of Sydney, attempted to use the wood of fig-trees in the manufacture of bats, but the experiment proved unsuccessful.)

During war-time our troops have contented themselves with rudely shaped bats made from neighbouring trees or fences, and in various out-of-the-way parts of the earth, where proper implements have not readily been obtainable, similar ingenuity has been resorted to. The latter fact recalls a story—it is probably a story in more senses than one—to the effect that, on the death of a one-legged missionary who had endeared himself to a tribe on an island in the Pacific largely through teaching them cricket, his wooden leg was set up, as a mark of respect, above his grave, and that, the soil being most fertile, it struck root, so that for years afterwards the natives were able to cut from it the wood wherewith to manufacture their bats.

Careful inquiries have elicited the fact that many of the early bat-makers—the men who made a living out of the business—were originally basket-makers. Almost the first of them was Thompson, of Eton, who flourished about 1820. The instruments made by the manufac-

turers were somewhat ponderous weapons and devoid of balance. They had, however, the great advantage over modern bats of lasting almost a life-time. Thus, the bat with which Mr. William Ward made his historic score of 278 at Lord's in 1820 he used for fifty years, whilst when the late Mr. Herbert Jenner-Fust played for Hill against Rockhampton in 1880 the bat he wielded was one which had been made in 1829 and been presented to him by Mr. Benjamin Aislabie in 1831. Mr. Philip Norman, writing in 1897, said of the latter: "It now weighs just under 2 lb. 7 oz., has never been spliced, and, though sprung from time immemorial, the thickness of its handle is such that it may last for centuries." A famous firm of bat-makers was that of Messrs. E. J. Page & Co., of Kennington Park Road. Their business, which dated back to 1815, was located originally near Penton Place, within about half a mile of where the Oval was afterwards formed. The founders were two brothers, Edward John and William Page. At a comparatively early period in the history of the firm the latter retired, after which the business was carried on by Mr. E. J. Page until his death, at a ripe age, in 1878.

Compared with modern bats, the old-time ones, even those straight in the pod, appear very unwieldy and primitive contrivances. How the early players succeeded in scoring as heavily as they did with them seems quite a mystery when one comes across a more crude specimen than usual. What an enormous effect the balance of a bat can have on a man's play can be known only to those who have used one of the earlier kind as well as the best of modern-time production. Some of the latter are so perfect in this respect as to appear, when one makes a few imaginary strokes with them, almost capable of playing by themselves. It was

about eighty years ago that whalebone was first inserted in the handles of bats in order to increase the driving powers. (Many years ago a story used to be told of a Kent amateur, who one day discovered, after playing a long innings, that one of his opponents had thoughtfully written " Jehu " in large letters on his bat, because it " drove furiously." But this by the way.) Despite the fact that modern bats drive more than the old ones, we have not been able to boast greater hitters than such giants of the past as Messrs. C. I. Thornton, G. J. Bonnor and W. J. Ford.

The greatest number of bats made from a willow tree is 1,179 from one which was planted at Boreham, in Essex, in 1835 and taken down on April 19, 1888. When cut down it measured 101 feet long, 5 feet 9 inches in diameter, and weighed over eleven tons. The average number obtained from a single tree is about two hundred. As tending to show how great a quantity of willow is necessary for bat-making, it may be stated that one firm, Messrs. Wisden, alone has 25,000 bats in stock at the end of each February. By noting such a fact as this, one can readily understand how popular the game has become. Nowadays every player possesses a bat of his own, which was certainly far from being the case until well within recent times. It has been recorded that, in a match played on the ice by the Sheffield Club in January 1826, one of the bats broke, and that, as another could not be procured to replace it, the players had to give up the double-wicket game and take to single-wicket. Bats were luxuries in those days. The best willow—*Salix alba*, var. *Cærulea*—is to be found only in Essex, Hertfordshire and Suffolk.

Until about the year 1840 the length of the bat was not restricted, whilst now, although the law allows a limit of 38 inches, the average length is about 35,

the blade being 22 and the handle 12½ or 13. The weight, which can be as much or as little as desired, averages about 2 lb. 3 oz., but big hitters generally prefer a heavier bat, e.g. Albert Trott used one weighing as much as 2 lb. 10 oz.—a weapon which A. E. Knight aptly termed "a savage beast of a thing." The Hon. Robert Grimston, when batting against a side to which Mr. Alfred Mynn belonged, always took in two bats with him—the heavier one to meet Mynn's attack, and the one of ordinary weight to oppose the rest of the bowling. The famous Earl of Winchilsea, one of the chief founders of the M.C.C., used a bat of 4 lb. 2 oz., but even heavier have been known, and at Lord's is one of the year 1771 which turns the scale at 5 lb.

The weight of a bat is an important matter to every player, and one which is seldom given the attention it deserves. "Always play with a bat suited to your strength and height," said "W. G.," who opined that "Very little mischief may result from playing with one two or three ounces too heavy, for weight does not affect your playing straight or driving properly; but it is better to err on the side of having one too light, for with a heavy one you cannot cut or time the ball correctly." "Felix" gave similar advice in *The Cricket Bat, and How to Use It.* "Do not attempt to play with a heavy bat," he wrote; "select one that you can use as if it were a mere whip in your hands, and easy and comfortable to feel." "Felix," it may be recalled, was perhaps the most brilliant off-hitter of his day, and would, therefore, be in a position to appreciate fully a bat such as he described. The cut was his *forte* and his delight. "Welcome, thrice welcome, thou most majestic hit!" he cried.

To possess a bat which seems to act in perfect unison with mind and muscle is a most valuable asset to any

player, of whatever rank. I can recall Mr. H. T. Hewett, the free-hitting Somerset cricketer, expressing his delight with a certain bat. "I can waggle it about so well," he explained. It was probably at the end of the eighteenth century, or early in the nineteenth, that the weight of bats was reduced so much as to approximate with that of the present-day implement. John Bowyer, who played for Surrey from 1810 until 1828, used a bat which turned the scale at 2¾ lb., and that may be taken as the weight of the average bat played with about that period. "W. G.," I believe, preferred one of 2 lb. 5½ oz.

The splice was introduced about seventy or eighty years ago, about which time whalebone was often found inserted in the handle to increase the driving power. (*Bell's Life* of March 19, 1843, in "Answers to Correspondents," stated that "spring-handled bats are allowed.") Messrs. E. J. Page & Co. in 1880 patented the rubber handle cover for bats, and were one of the earliest firms to insert rubber in the handle in order to diminish sting.

Although practically all modern bats are made of willow, one occasionally comes across one manufactured of some other kind of wood. The Duke of Clarence, for example, had one made of walnut and mounted in silver, for which he paid £50, while it is a well-established fact that the first hundred hit in South Australia was made with a cherry-wood bat. Some early bats were fashioned of oak, and in *The Cryketeers*, a poem of the year 1790, we are told that:

> So the *fierce* Cricketeer, with bat of beechen tree,
> Strikes the terrific ball—the plain resounds
> With trilling clangors!

Of curious bats one could mention several examples.

There is, for instance, one in existence made from a willow grown from a cutting taken from a tree which stood near Napoleon's grave at St. Helena. Wide bats, containing a trap door through which the ball disappears, are seen occasionally in charity matches. In September 1875 a curious match was played at Bishop Auckland between M. Brown and W. Piers, the former staking £20 to £10 that the latter could not bowl him out in twelve hours, and the arrangement being that Brown should find his own bat and Piers his own ball. On the day of the match Brown produced a bat ten inches in width, which completely hid the wicket, whilst Piers had a pot-share ball weighing 27 ounces, as used in bowling matches. The latter's attack with his ponderous missile produced such an effect that, in a short time, the bat began to show signs of being splintered. At length, by some accident, Brown left a stump uncovered, and the ball, coming straight, disturbed the wicket, Piers thus proving successful in nine minutes and a half.

William Ward, in single-wicket, more than once handicapped himself by playing with a walking-stick whilst allowing his opponent the use of an ordinary bat. "Bat *v.* Brush" were the conditions of a game near Godalming in 1815, and "Umbrellas *v.* Bats" was the title of many a match between Officers and Natives in the early days of Bombay cricket.

William Tunks, of New South Wales, who was Mayor of St. Leonards in that State for eighteen consecutive years, was a big, powerful man who used a bat with an iron handle. This fact serves to recall that, in *Bell's Life* of May 10, 1840, "One of the Somerton Eleven" described a new bat invented by a cutler of Salisbury, who inserted a bar of steel in the middle of the handle. It was

claimed that the ball could thereby be driven a great distance.

Many followers of the game have had a bat covered with the autographs of famous players, and, when all the available space on back and front has been occupied, have had the bats varnished and polished. At Wisden's, in Cranbourn Street, is a most interesting collection of historic bats got together by the late Mr. Harry Luff, the chief item in it being the one, probably almost one hundred and fifty years old, which was found nailed to a beam when Crosby Hall was being demolished. Mr. Charles Pratt Green, too, of Great Malvern, possesses a hundred and fifty bats with a history. Reference to these collections makes one ask, "Why should not a batsman, when he has played a great innings, present his bat to the M.C.C., so that it should have a permanent home at the headquarters of the game?" In this manner an unrivalled collection could easily be formed, and doubtless the powers-that-be at Lord's would readily consent to the proposal if made to them. The Club has so frequently given presentation bats to various successful players that to reverse the procedure would not only be a graceful act on the part of cricketers, but would also assist in providing a museum which would prove most interesting to future generations.

Probably because scoring has become so easy a matter, compared with what it was, bats are not now given so frequently for large individual innings played in exhibition cricket. What must, in its way, be a record was associated with Mr. Alfred Lubbock's success in the Eton *v.* Winchester match, at Eton, in 1863. The batsman named, whose doings before he reached the age of twenty were almost phenomenal, was then seventeen, and in celebration of his score of 174 not

out he received no less than forty bats. Dr. E. M. Grace was given his fiftieth bat as early as 1865, at the age of twenty-three, and the question "What can he have done with them all?" naturally suggests itself. This is answered, in part at least, by a memorandum in one of his note-books, which reads: "Nineteen bats put into big box upstairs in bedroom." Doubtless he gave away many others to young players of promise or to friends. When "Billy" Burrup was Honorary Secretary of the Surrey County Cricket Club, it was the invariable custom to present each player making a score of fifty or more with a new bat. The presentations were generally made at the conclusion of the innings by "Billy" himself, who would stand on the steps of the old pavilion with a pipe in one hand and the bat in the other. The ceremony—a small one, perhaps, but considered important none the less—was always marked by a short speech, a kindly speech, from the Hon. Secretary, who seldom failed to conclude his remarks by observing: "You *'ave* that *pluck* about you which we ALL so much admire."

Old William Burrup was a picturesque figure in those less serious days, and one regrets that photography had not reached its present state of perfection when he was wont to carry the claret-cup to the players in the centre of the Oval on a hot afternoon, or to collect money in a coco-nut shell from the ring in order to recognize a performance of unusual merit on the part of one of those participating in the match.

It is remarkable how much information of a most miscellaneous nature can be gathered by talking to old cricketers about their bats. The reminiscences of one will be sad as he recalls how he lost an old favourite some years after Anno Domini had compelled him to relinquish the game; another veteran will point with

pride to his "stick" in a corner of the dining-room and recall scores made half a century before; whilst a third will confide to you that "the best he ever used" is reposing, safely but unsuspected, in a drawer in his wardrobe upstairs.

I can sympathize fully with the old fellows in their devotion, and on my own bookshelves I have two veterans—bats, not cricketers—discoloured with age, and one of them sprung, with which I played my small part last century. Broadbridge, of Sussex, used his favourite bat as a walking-stick, so fond was he of it; George Anderson, the Yorkshireman, had been known to take his to bed with him; and old Bowyer, of Surrey, and Daniel Day had theirs buried with them.

Among my friends I am glad to include an old gentleman, now almost a nonagenarian, one of whose most cherished possessions is a bat presented to him by his old clubmates some time near the middle of the last century. Occasionally he will become drowsy in the evening, and begin to doze and allow his pipe to go out; but should I, with the most apparent innocence, make allusion to the old bat, he is out of his armchair like a shot, and, almost before I can murmur "W. G.," has taken it from its place of honour in the hall, and, with eyes sparkling and his whole being quivering, is once more showing "how fields were won." After the hall lamp has been in jeopardy for about ten minutes, we will return to the dining-room, or his study, and then, with the bat handy on a table or couch, recount to each other, for perhaps the hundredth time, the story of some long-forgotten (to all but us) hit or catch which turned the fortunes of a game.

Since writing the above I have taken my favourite bat from its resting-place on my bookshelves and

spoken to it as to an old friend, and the words of Mr. E. V. Lucas have recurred to me:

> Such a bat! Such a bat!
> Full many a bat have I handled since then,
> And cut with, and driven with, time and again,
> But never a one like that.
> Thrice happy the ghost who the ghost of it wields—
> Such joy must be his in Elysian fields!

CHAPTER VIII

UMPIRES AND UMPIRING

PRINCE HENRY: What, four?
Thou said'st but two, even now.
FALSTAFF: Four, Hal; I told thee four.
POINS: Ay, ay, he said four.

1 Henry IV, ii, 4.

Out, I say.

Macbeth, iv, 1.

You seem to be honest plain men.

The Winter's Tale, iv, 3.

IT is probable that in the very early days of cricket—when the game was but a very primitive amusement for rustic folk—there were no umpires appointed to settle disputes and give decisions upon any knotty points which might arise during play. Like the introduction of the third stump in the construction of the wicket, or the alteration in the shape of the bat, the nomination of umpires was found necessary only as cricket developed and became recognized as a game of skill. From William Goldwin's poem, "In Certamen Pilæ," [1] published in his *Musæ Juveniles* in 1706, we know that so far back as the reign of Queen Anne it was customary for two umpires to be appointed for a match. The oldest laws extant are those drawn up in 1744,

[1] See also the Rev. A. W. Oxford's *William Goldwin*, 1682–1747 (private circulation, 1911), pp. 10–13. A translation of the poem was made by Mr. H. A. Perry for Mr. R. A. Austen-Leigh's *Etoniana* of December 30, 1922, and was reprinted in *The Cricketer* of the following February. Another translation may be found on pages 8–17 of H. P.-T.'s *Early Cricket* (Nottingham: C. H. Richards, 1923).

and it is interesting, even at this distance of time, to note how explicit and precise were the instructions given for the carrying out of their duties. An account of a game played on Walworth Common, in Surrey, on June 27, 1749, between Squire Hartley's Eleven and J. Tatum's Eleven, says: "The umpire was Mr. William Austen, of The Lady and Cat in Barnaby Street, who gave his judgment with the utmost impartiality, and received the thanks of the whole body, who afterwards had an elegant entertainment at his house." This is, so far as is known, the first umpire of whom any record has been preserved.

It may be news to many that it is only about sixty years since an umpire donned a white coat or jacket for the first time, and it is, of course, much nearer still to the present day that the practice became at all general. The innovation was certainly a move in the right direction, and it is not a little curious that the matter was not continued to its logical conclusion. Why should not an umpire be expected to do the thing thoroughly, and turn out in white trousers, white boots and white cap as well as a white coat? If so attired, the fieldsmen would never lose sight of the ball against dark-coloured trousers or black boots—umpires' feet, like their appetites, are often substantial—and the appearance of the man would certainly be improved. I commend the idea to the powers-that-be for whatever it may be worth.

In another matter concerning umpires does England lag, especially in a hot summer. In the Solomon Islands—or is it Samoa?—those who undertake the duties are provided with fly-flappers for the benefit of the batsmen, and at times the scene must be rather impressive, for generally three umpires are stationed at each wicket. In other countries many a batsman, and

many a fieldsman, must often have wished something in the nature of a fly-flapper or a fan had been available.

More than once would-be reformers have suggested that umpires should be allowed to give a decision respecting a batsman's dismissal without being appealed to. Theoretically, an umpire should be strictly impartial and have a thorough knowledge of the laws. If all who undertook the duties were so qualified for the position there would be little objection to allowing them to give a batsman out without being asked for a decision. But such perfection we can never expect to find—at least, not in this world.

It would probably astonish many people to know how many who undertake umpiring duties are unacquainted with various points respecting the play. Years ago an amusing instance of this came to my notice. A famous cricketer, who played for his county for twenty years and in some international matches, was made a first-class umpire upon his retirement from active service. Everyone assumed that he understood the game, yet, after he had been "standing" in great matches for more than a year, he electrified everyone in the dressing-room at the Oval by declaring that a batsman could not be run out off a no-ball. A friend, who was present, dragged me into the room to hear the remark repeated.

Now, if such a person could be so ignorant on such a point, is it not reasonable to suppose that the great majority of umpires in less important games—men with very far less experience as active cricketers—would not be better qualified to undertake the duties? Many and many a match has been ruined by the blunders of an ignoramus. Frequently, especially in country matches, one will find the duties of umpire undertaken quite cheerfully and light-heartedly by a man almost totally

devoid of all knowledge of the rudiments of the game. Amusing results may follow, but often one stupid decision will spoil a match.

There was, for instance, the individual who, when appealed to for leg-before-wicket, turned to the batsman and said: "Take your dum foot away; I can't see the wicket!" Another similarly gifted person, when asked for "middle," distinguished himself by taking eleven paces down the pitch, and then saying triumphantly to the astonished batsman: "There! I can't give it nearer than that!"

Hundreds of other cases of ignorance could be cited if necessary, but practically everyone who has had much experience of the game will agree that the duties of umpire are often undertaken by people not qualified for the task. To allow one such person to adjudge batsmen out without being appealed to would, far more often than not, mean chaos.

So much for the question of incompetence. When we come to the matter of impartiality we are not on quite such firm ground. To prove a man has a lack of knowledge respecting the laws is an easy matter compared with demonstrating that he is biased in his judgments. Yet, if the truth could be known, it would probably be found that many umpires would be quite surprised if they were informed that they should show equal favour to both sides.

Dean Hole used to tell how an old fellow, returning thanks at a supper for the toast of "The Umpires," remarked: "My opinion of an umpire is that he should be fair, and I don't hold with foul dealings. What I always say is, 'Fairation with'—a short pause—'just a slight leaning towards your own side.'" Who that has played much minor cricket has not had practical experience of that "slight leaning"?

Perhaps the M.C.C. had the above anecdote in mind when, in their official interpretations and decisions—a pamphlet of which every club should possess at least one copy—remarked: "It should be noted, especially in League and Saturday matches, that umpires are appointed 'one for each end' and not for each side."

It is a fact that the following resolution was once passed at a general meeting of a village club in the Midlands: "That although a certain umpire in ordinary matches gave general satisfaction, yet, taking into consideration the peculiarities of other umpires, he must be regarded as a little too fair for such important competitions as the Derbyshire and Wake Cups." Evidently he lacked the "slight leaning" referred to by Dean Hole, and one wonders whether the resolution caused him to develop it.

It requires a very strong eleven to play a team with a twelfth man, and hundreds of umpires have secretly prided themselves on their ability to rise to the occasion.

Henry Royston, who was engaged at Lord's for thirty years, more than once proved his skill in this way. In an I Zingari match against Beaudesert, the Marquess of Anglesey's place near Lichfield, in 1861, he gave Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell run out when there was not too much time left, and that famous batsman was past the wicket. After the match Royston explained to Mr. Mitchell thus: "I say, Squire, I was obliged to give you out, because we couldn't have won the match in the time if you had stayed in. We're obliged to study them things, you know, else 'ow are we going to win our matches?" I Zingari won that game by 353 runs.

To sum up, I should be against allowing umpires power to order a batsman out on their own initiative

until their knowledge and impartiality were proved. In other words, I am strongly in favour of the retention of Law 46 as it stands : " They shall not order a batsman out unless appealed to by the other side." After all, the game is played between two elevens, and if one side gets a batsman out without being aware of the fact that team should surely be handicapped on account of its ignorance. It is all part of the game, and to permit an umpire to adjudge a batsman out without being appealed to would, in my opinion, be to invest that official with powers of too sweeping a nature altogether. Especially in matches in which neutral umpires were not appointed, much bickering would probably ensue, and in some cases even more things might happen. The law as it is at present may occasionally enable a batsman to have a lucky escape, but that is all part of the game ; and cricket would not be what it is if luck were eliminated.

Respecting the partiality or incompetency of umpires, the following letter, dated August 4, 1883, addressed by the Hon. Robert Grimston to Fred Gale, is distinctly interesting : " The game, which ought to be scientific and skilful, will become ruffianly and, upon many cricket grounds, dangerous. But the difficulty consists in the *cowardice* of umpires. We want a man like old Bill Caldecourt. Previous to the Lancashire match at Lord's I impressed upon the umpires, Farrands and Wild, the necessity of doing their duty, and they promised me that they would act fearlessly. I have no hesitation in saying that in that match Nash, who was very successful, threw every ball. After the match, when I remonstrated with the umpires, they answered me that they considered Nash ' perfectly fair ' ! ! ! I was checkmated. A short time afterwards, when speaking to Alfred Shaw upon the subject, the latter

said to me: 'They no more think Nash fair than you do, sir; but they are afraid to call him.'"

The matter concerning umpires' remuneration is another not without interest. One of the laws of baseball is as follows: "The umpire in a match game shall be privileged to accept such compensation for his services as the contesting clubs shall deem advisable, provided he receives from each club the same amount of compensation, but not otherwise." Such a law is necessary in baseball, as only one umpire is engaged, and for one club to pay him more than the other would be to offer a premium for partiality. With cricket, however, the case is different. Each side nominates its own umpire—reference is now being made to club cricket—and the pecuniary arrangement decided on is a matter merely for the umpire and the team which engages him. How often, it may be asked, does an umpire in such a game know what fee is paid to the official engaged by the other side? The question of the payment of umpires was commented on by *Bell's Life* of June 25, 1837, in a report of a match played at Lord's between King's College and London University. "Is it a fact," it was asked, "that the King's College eleven are in the habit of paying their umpire double if they win a match? If such is the case, the sooner the practice is put a stop to the better; not that we think the man would give a decision contrary to his conscience, but that it is giving an umpire more interest in the result of a match than he ought to have, and also that he should not have a temptation to do wrong."

It is really quite remarkable how at times people who know practically nothing of the game will undertake to umpire. Mr. Richard Brooks, the old-time wicket-keeper, once told me an amusing experience in this respect.

It was in a good-class club match, in which the vicar of the parish volunteered to stand until the official umpire arrived. Almost immediately the reverend gentleman found himself out of his depth, for, appealed to "How's that?" by the bowler, he calmly asked, "How's what?"

"How's that for leg-before?" explained the bowler.

"What constitutes leg-before?" queried the parson.

At that point it was considered advisable to send for a copy of the laws. This was examined very carefully by the vicar, who, *at the end of ten minutes*, announced: "Without the slighest hesitation I say not out!" It was not surprising that the bowler considered he had a slight grievance and that fortune had been somewhat unkind to him.

Again, about thirty or a few more years ago, after a match at Hove between Sussex and Kent, a single-wicket game was arranged between two of the players —I believe they were W. M. Bradley and Bland. Ranjitsinhji was asked if he would umpire, and in his cheery manner replied, "Yes, certainly." He did his best, it is true, but it at once became evident that he knew little of the laws governing that branch of the game. It was a friendly, light-hearted affair, however, and no harm was done and only amusement caused.

It is in small matches, in which each side has its own umpire, that disputes are most frequent, for, perhaps unconsciously, the officials are prone to be a little partial. Mr. William Wright, father of the well-known "Chawles" of Nottingham, had many stories to tell in support of this, one of which may be inserted here. In an inter-village match the play was so even that the last two men were in when the scores were level. At that exciting moment the bowler delivered a no-ball, which the batsman hit blindly and, attempting a single,

was run out. The umpires differed in their rulings, one maintaining the game was a tie as the striker was run out, and the other stating the in-side was successful by a wicket, the call of no-ball having given them the game. How the matter was settled Mr. Wright never knew, for pandemonium ensued and lasted so long that he could not wait for the result.

Another incident which occasioned much discussion occurred in a small game in the Melbourne district in 1926–7. The two last men were in with a single required to win, and with a "rabbit" to receive the ball. The bowler, who was fast, took a very long run, and the moment he began his approach to the wicket, and so made the ball in play, the batsmen, by previous arrangement, darted across the pitch. The run was completed successfully, and the game won, but it was asked, "How should the run be entered in the score sheet?"

Mr. W. P. Bolland once asked, "Is a ball lost if you can see it?" He recalled how, in a match near Blandford, a ball rolled into a pond and seventeen—all required to win—were run, and allowed, for the hit, although "Lost ball" was called. This reminds one that, on July 21, 1866 (the Review Saturday of the Wimbledon Camp), Mr. C. W. Burls, playing on the Springfield ground, Putney, for Peckham Rye Standard *v.* Springfield, made an on-drive out of the ground off Mr. W. Barnett, the Private Banks' bowler, the ball pitching into the road along which the Volunteers were marching on their way from Putney Station to Wimbledon Camp. The usual question to the umpire —a Surrey Colt—"How many runs for that?" elicited the startling reply, "Eleven—seven for the hit, four for lost-ball."

An umpire's decision, whether right or wrong, should

be accepted without demur. That is one of the first principles of the game with which every young cricketer should be made thoroughly acquainted. Yet some cricketers, whilst recognizing the truth of the *dictum*, have, on the spur of the moment, acted altogether against the axiom. There was, for instance, a curious occurrence which marked the Yorkshire *v.* Kent match at Sheffield in 1914. Booth, it was stated, was given out hit-wicket to Woolley, but maintained that he had completed his stroke by the time he trod on the stumps. An argument appears to have ensued, during which the Yorkshire captain came from the pavilion on to the field of play, and talked over the matter with Mr. Troughton, the Kent skipper, and the umpires; and, as the result of it all, the batsman retired. That I believe to be a plain statement of the actual facts—I was not present at the match, and can therefore speak only from report; but, if the incident is described correctly, the whole procedure seems to have been most unusual. Everything, of course, turns on the action of the batsman, who, having been adjudged out, should have retired at once.

> His not to reason why—
> His but to do or die.

Firmly believing that a mistake had been made, however, he was apparently tempted to explain his point of view, and presumably Sir A. W. White went out to persuade him to retire. That, at least, seems the natural explanation of things, and if it is correct would mean a verdict to the effect that the batsman had created an "incident" whilst temporarily over-keen.

The occurrence recalls a circumstance attending the match between England and Nottinghamshire at Lord's about the middle of last century. Julius Cæsar—not

the Emperor, but a later man of the same name—being unwell, was allowed a substitute to run for him; but Cæsar, owing to forgetfulness, made a run, leaving his representative behind. Clarke put down the wicket at the end Cæsar had reached, and in answer to an appeal the umpire said, "Not out." Thereupon Clarke, who was quite an autocrat, proceeded to the pavilion, where the dispute was finally settled by the Committee of the M.C.C. that Cæsar should be given out. But the most curious thing of all was that the umpire was, in fact, right and the Committee wrong.

Again, there was the George Giffen incident at Adelaide in December 1889, during a match between South Australia and Victoria. An appeal was made against Giffen (who had fallen over) for leg-before-wicket, but was dismissed. In rising, he knocked off a bail, and the umpire at the batsman's end, being appealed to, gave him out "hit wicket." Giffen, however, refused to retire on the ground that he could not be given out after the other umpire had declared him not out. Moreover, he contended that the ball was dead before the bail fell off, and even questioned whether his bat or the wind had disturbed the bail. The Victorians and South Australians said that, being given out, he ought to retire; but Giffen would not go, and the Victorians played on under protest. Giffen, who had scored nine when this incident occurred, was not dismissed until he had made 85. Not every opposing captain would have been as lenient as was the Victorian leader on that occasion. Some would have claimed the match, and others would either have carried the player off the field, or have given him into custody!

Concerning disputes resulting from umpires' rulings many pages could be written, for such incidents have

been very numerous. Thus, when the Surrey *v.* Kent match at Carshalton as far back as 1762 came to a sudden conclusion owing to a disagreement respecting the dismissal of a batsman in Surrey's first innings, it was recorded: "From words they came to blows, which occasioned several broken heads, as likewise a challenge between two persons of distinction." Less dramatic, though scarcely less unusual, was the experience which once befell the famous Jimmy Dean, of Sussex. Having given a decision which decided the result of a game in the country, he was pursued by the friends of the beaten side until he succeeded in reaching sanctuary at Lord's. Having identified himself by a plaintive assurance that he was poor little Jimmy Dean, he was admitted by the Tavern window and so escaped his persecutors.

It will probably be news to some to hear that Charles Stewart Parnell, the Irish agitator, was a cricketer, and was given to behaving in remarkable fashion when things did not go to his liking. He was a contemporary at Cambridge of Mr. Charles Green, who has said:

> He used to play cricket, and on one occasion gave a curious glimpse of that obstinacy and contempt for conventionality which afterwards gained him such a great reputation. He was batting against an eleven of Trinity, or of the K.T.L., and was given out lbw after he had made only a few runs. Then there was a row—not an ordinary row by any means—for he refused to go out, and stuck to his guns with grim determination. In the end he had to go, but not until he had succeeded in producing a decided impression.

In later years he led the Wicklow team against Phœnix, in Phœnix Park. Several of his men were able to be present only with great trouble and inconvenience, some of them having been obliged to take

long drives in the early morning. Early in the day a dispute occurred between Mr. Parnell and the Phœnix team. The Wicklow team wished their captain to give in and let the match proceed. Parnell, however, was stubborn, and, rather than give up the point, marched his growling eleven back. His partiality to cricket may have been inherited, for his father was a member of the Eton team of 1828 which played against Harrow at Lord's.

Of umpire stories, as of the making of books, there is apparently no end. A few of them, which may be new to the present generation, may be recalled here.

Sir T. C. O'Brien was once given out unfairly at Cambridge, and was furious. Going up to the umpire, he said: "That was either a very ignorant decision or a downright swindle." The umpire, putting on his blandest smile, coolly replied: "I guess, sir, it was just a bit of both." Still more outrageous was the decision of an old player in Kent: "Hout! And I wins my five bob!" and, on another occasion: "Not out; and I'll bet you a crown we win!" It was this umpire who invariably set the field for the home side before the game began, and who would advise when a bowling change was desirable. If remonstrated with, he would be filled with indignation, and would reply in icy tones that he had always been accustomed to associate with *gentlemen* on the cricket field. But perhaps the most unjustifiable decision of all was given against Barlow whilst participating in a League match in Lancashire. "I didn't see it," admitted the man appealed to; "but," he added cheerily, "I give him out!"

Of many curious decisions may be recalled one which adjudged a batsman out in South Africa for "breach of etiquette" for making a back-handed hit.

H. H. Stephenson, of Surrey and England fame, was once given out at Gravesend for kicking the ball, whilst in a game at Elstree School a youthful umpire gave a striker marching orders for using only one hand in making a hit. In Buckinghamshire, something over forty years ago, "One short" was called when only a single was attempted, a fact which reminds one that, in a first-class match at the Crystal Palace, only three runs were allowed for a boundary hit because a batsman made a short run before the ball reached the ring.

In a match played in Gloucestershire about eighty years ago, between Wootton-under-Edge and Kingscote Juniors, a man was given out for not having his bat on the ground although he himself was well on the right side of the crease. About the same time, in a match at Walworth between eleven One-Arm and eleven One-Leg, as one of the latter was running between the wickets his wooden leg flew off. The batsman, keen on completing the run, hopped on, but point fielded the wooden leg and hurled the wicket down with it, and, on appeal, the man was given out as he had not made good his ground.

A story—perhaps it is a story in more senses than one—is told of a country umpire who called "No ball" as the bowler stepped over the crease. "Wide," he added, as the ball appeared to be so. But the batsman reached out and struck the ball. "Well hit!" shouted the umpire, and "Well caught!" as a fieldsman brought off a catch. "Hout! Hover!" And he strolled meditatively towards square-leg.

The foregoing decisions were, of course, thoroughly opposed to the laws of the game, and are mentioned only because they show a more or less humorous spirit pervading the soul of the umpire. The following

rulings, however, were of a more serious nature, and, for that reason, perhaps more interesting.

In a match between Norton and Staffordshire the umpire gave the batsman not out, although his wicket was bowled down, because he did not see the ball bowled. At Bickley, in Kent, a player, although bowled and stumped, was given "Not bowled out" by the bowler's umpire because he did not see the ball bowled, and by the square-leg umpire "Not stumped" because first bowled.

The law which declares, somewhat ambiguously, that "The bowler shall deliver the ball with one foot on the ground behind the bowling crease," has frequently caused an enterprising umpire to no-ball a man for delivering a ball with both feet behind. Richard Daft used to tell a story concerning a young bowler who, huffy because he could not get a good length, continually over-pitching the ball, was advised by the umpire to bowl from about a yard behind the wicket. The bowler argued that he could not do so, because the law gave permission for only one foot to be behind the bowling crease when the ball was delivered. The umpire, however, kindly explained matters, with the result that the bowler went further and further back until at last he succeeded in bowling down the wicket at his own end!

In 1866 a decision which occasioned much discussion was given at Gravesend, the person chiefly concerned being "Tiny" Wells, of Sussex, who took guard within about an inch of the stumps and who, when the bowler advanced, also came forward. In the Kent *v.* Sussex match of the year mentioned this peculiarity was remembered by George Bennett, who pretended to deliver the ball from about a yard behind the non-striker's wicket, instead of from the wicket in the

ordinary way. The result was that Wells became disconcerted, and, moving his bat in his agitation, knocked a stump, causing a bail to fall. The umpire —the famous "Jimmy" Dean, of happy memory— was right in giving Wells out, as he struck the wicket in the act of playing, and the M.C.C. have ruled that the ball is in play as soon as the bowler commences his run. It is, therefore, possible for a match to be completed without a single ball being delivered. Another manner in which the same result could be reached would be for every man to be run out whilst backing-up too far as the bowler is about to deliver the ball.

Occasionally it happens that a point arises in the course of a game for which the laws make no provision. For example, playing for Past *v.* Present of Manor House School, Clapham, in 1904, D. L. A. Jephson appealed for l.b.w. against one of his young opponents. The batsman walked away, and Jephson, thinking the umpire had said "Not out," asked the batsman to return, which he did. At the end of the over, five more balls having been delivered, the umpire said to Jephson, "I gave him out!" The question arose as to whether the player should continue his innings or not. He was allowed to return, but his side did not profit to any extent as the result. A somewhat similar case once occurred in a match between Kensington Park and Surbiton, wherein a batsman was given out but continued his innings as nobody heard the umpire's decision. The mistake was rectified afterwards by the batsman retiring voluntarily, the runs made by him since the decision being deducted from the total.

One of the most extraordinary decisions ever given in a match of importance was when Henty gave

C. P. Foley out for picking up a bail in the Middlesex *v.* Essex match at Lord's in 1893. The ruling was so absolutely absurd that the Sussex captain, W. L. Murdoch, requested the batsman to continue his innings, which he did.

Of tales concerning the curious expressions sometimes employed by umpires many pages could be written. A few, however, must suffice. In an account of a match in the West Indies in which a man-of-war's crew were taking part we come across the following anecdote, told by one of the players. "About this time I made an appeal to the umpire upon a question of stumping a man, but he had his back turned and was buying a piece of sugar-cane. He apologized profusely. He said: 'I'se too sorry, massa, jus' too sorry, but I'se dam hungry, sar!'" Fancy a mere umpire being hungry! Almost as astonishing was the reply received in answer to an appeal for lbw: "Can't give him out, sir: the gentleman's on fire!" The explanation is that the ball had struck the batsman on the leg and ignited a box of matches in his trousers pocket.

In the North-Western Territory it is recalled how a Presbyterian minister, who occasionally "stood" in matches, would answer the batsman's application for block with "A little more to the north," or "A little east," or "A little west"—replies which certainly put in the shade that of "Centre and far stick," which C. W. Alcock remembered hearing made by a non-commissioned officer at Warley Garrison. The invitation to "Ploom thy baat, laad!" was once made to W. T. Graburn in a match in Yorkshire by a well-meaning plumber who had been prevailed on to umpire in an emergency. It has been recorded at least once that a man when umpiring stood in a position which

incommoded the bowler, who suggested to him that he might stand sideways, upon which he replied: "Lord, sir, I be bigger that way!"

Old Tom Barker, of Notts, was an umpire who would often make humorous replies to questions addressed to him. A story is told respecting a nervous youth, a duffer, who, when batting, kept his bat immovably fixed in the block-hole, and with such success that at last the wicket-keeper demurred. The batsman then turned to Barker and asked, "Am I out if I don't move my bat?" to which Tom replied like a shot, "No, but you thundering soon will be if you do move it!"

The late R. A. H. Mitchell, during the last few years of his life, used to assert that players objected far more frequently than formerly to umpires' decisions. Perhaps this may be attributed, in part at least, to the fact that in bygone days batsmen, owing to the rougher nature of the wickets, were more often clean bowled, appeals thereby being rendered considerably fewer. The late Lord St. Helier, better remembered as Sir Francis Jeune, was a most kind-hearted man and had a charming ground at Arlington Manor, Newbury, where he would umpire occasionally. If any man could ever boast that he never had a single one of his decisions questioned by batsmen it must have been Sir Francis, for it was whispered that he was never known to adjudge a man leg-before or run out. In contrast to this may be mentioned an incident which occurred in a match in Surrey in 1833 between Richmond and Reigate. The last man on the Richmond side, C. Aris, was given run out by the Reigate umpire, and the decision was considered so unfair by H. Aris, the player's brother, that he appealed to the crowd to seize the umpire and duck him in the river. A contemporary report stated

that the umpire would have been ducked had it not been for the interference of his friends and the respectable portion of those present. A precisely similar incident occurred at Melton Mowbray the same year, on the occasion of the local club's game with Mountsorrel. This recalls to mind the fact that in a match between Benenden and Penshurst—two famous nurseries of Kent cricket—an umpire actually was ducked in a pond for giving a decision considered unsatisfactory.

Many players and followers of the game must have seen the umpire at the bowler's end bring off a smart catch in order to save himself from injury. Considering with what force modern bats drive and how frequently an umpire's sight of the ball is obscured by the bowler, it is remarkable how seldom a really serious accident happens. Records exist, however, of umpires being killed on the field of play by leg-hits as well as straight drives. Fractured ribs have been comparatively common occurrences, and more than one case could be cited of an umpire's death from heart failure due to over-excitement.

The most famous of all umpires was, beyond doubt, "Bob" Thoms. The position he occupied among cricketers was unique, and his association with all the chief gentlemen and professional players of several generations caused him to be regarded more as an institution than as an ordinary mortal. His unfailing courtesy and unbounded kind-heartedness combined to make him held in reverence and affection by all those whose pleasure and privilege it was to know him well. To listen to the old man when in a reminiscent vein was a treat which only those whose good fortune it was to play the part of listener can appreciate at the fullest. His anecdotes were always told in such picturesque and quaint language that even one whose

knowledge of the game and its history was very limited could not fail to be interested in all that he had to say. Many of his expressions were quite original, and he was able to make his hearers feel at home with him as soon as he began to talk.

His stories about the old-time players were always worth going miles to hear. One, which may or may not be true, but which probably is, is told concerning Billy Buttress, one of the very best bowlers in England seventy years or so ago. He was a lamp-lighter, of Cambridge, and had a vast capacity for liquor. One year he was playing at Lord's in a great match, and, on the second evening, the only hope for his side was that on the following morning he would be in his best form. To leave him to his own devices during the evening was not to be thought of in the circumstances. Thoms and another conspirator, "in the interests of cricket," thereupon enticed him, soon after stumps were drawn, to a cellar in the pavilion, and, when he had been induced to enter first, the door was slammed to and hastily locked, barred and bolted! Poor Buttress, who was a most unwilling prisoner throughout the night, when released the following morning, worked off his anger at the expense of the opposing side, who could make no stand against him and were easily beaten.

About a year before he died Thoms was presented by the Incogniti with a cheque for one hundred pounds and a keepsake, at a dinner given by the club in his honour. For some time before the event took place the old man was very excited about the speech he would have to make on the occasion, and he therefore composed one which he endeavoured to commit to memory. This was no easy matter, but, after walking up and down his sitting-room for several days with the copy before him, was at length accomplished. On the night

of the dinner Thoms accordingly felt at peace with all men, but when he rose to make his reply—"Why, bless me!" he afterwards exclaimed, "I forgot how it commenced!" That, however, was by no means regrettable, for Thoms was always most worth listening to when his remarks were unstudied, as was proved to be the case on this occasion, when he made a capital speech.

Many anecdotes, as is only natural, are current concerning him. To an aggrieved bowler who had unsuccessfully appealed for lbw he said with a smile, "Leg-before? Why, the ball didn't pitch in the same parish!" On another occasion a fast bowler was deliberately pitching very short, and after one of the balls had narrowly missed carrying away a portion of the batsman's anatomy, he turned to the umpire and remarked, "Good ball that." "Would have been," drily replied Thoms. "Would have been?" echoed the astonished youth. "What do you mean?" "It would have been a good length, sir, if you had been bowling from the other end!" was the crushing rejoinder. This was rather a severe remark, though one thoroughly deserved in the circumstances.

There must be hundreds of great players who can remember having been befriended by Thoms in their early days, for he was always extremely kind to young cricketers. An instance of this readiness to do a friendly turn for a youngster was related by a famous wicket-keeper who has since taken part in international cricket. "My first match of any importance," said he, "was one in which Thoms was standing. Twice I appealed for stumping, feeling certain in my own mind that the batsman was out of his ground on each occasion, but each time I received the reply, 'Not out.' When we crossed over just after the second decision, Thoms said to me quietly, 'You took the ball in front of the

wicket both times, young man.' Those few words taught me a lesson which I never forgot."

In another match a bowler who had appealed to Thoms again and again in stentorian tones, received at last the reply, "Not out, youngster; and I'm NOT deaf!" Once, when remarking on the ease with which old William Lillywhite used to discover a batsman's failings, Thoms said, "Bill Lillywhite could get wickets as easily as I can catch bluebottles!"—a curious simile, but one which gave a good idea of that bowler's greatness.

Richard Daft used to relate an amusing tale about the old man. During the luncheon interval the team of which Daft was a member was being photographed, and Thoms, as umpire, occupied the end position in the second row. Just as the cap was about to be lifted from the camera, one of the eleven remarked, "Look at Bob; he's got his Sunday smile on!" Thoms turned round quickly and denied the soft impeachment so emphatically that he came out in the photograph with at least a dozen heads, and so, much to his disgust, the picture had to be "doctored," with the result that his legs, body and arms appeared, but no head!

Before Thoms came on the scene, no umpire's name stood higher than that of William—"Honest Will"—Caldecourt, of Lord's. Difficult questions which arose in the course of play were submitted to him for decision as frequently as they were to the M.C.C. Committee, and the same can be said respecting Tom Barker. The latter's commentary on the laws, in Chapter V of *Cricketana*, makes most interesting reading even at this distance of time. As Pycroft observed, his suggestions looked as though he had been in bad company; but the same might be said of any Old Bailey judge.

CHAPTER IX

CRICKET AND THE CHURCH

THERE was a time, it may surprise many to know, when it was considered derogatory for a clergyman to participate in the game. Even during the past eighty years some excellent players have been obliged almost to abandon match playing on account of their Bishops not regarding it with a favouring eye. One such was the Rev. E. T. Drake, who retired from first-class cricket on taking Holy Orders, the Gentlemen in consequence losing one of their best men when opposing the Players, whilst another was the late Rev. John Morley Lee, a very good all-round cricketer, who played an innings of 110 at Canterbury in 1848, and who was a most rapid runner between wickets, especially when in with Mr. R. T. King. Some excellent players, however, contrived, by playing under an assumed name, to appear occasionally in great matches without angering their Bishop: thus, the Rev. J. Dolphin became J. Copford, and Canon McCormick—known to the many-headed as "Joe"—J. Bingley or J. Cambridge. One can readily understand the Bishop of London forbidding one of his clergy to take part in a great match advertised as being played for £1,000 a side, as was the case with the Rev. J. Dolphin in 1831. As far back as 1747 the Rev. Henry Venn, considered the best cricketer at the University whilst at Cambridge, took leave of the game in an interesting and dramatic manner, as already recorded (p. 126).

Not all clergymen possessed such strict views, however, for in 1744 a commentator on the game wrote:

"The robust *cricketer* plays in his shirt. The Rev. Mr. W——d, particularly, appears almost naked." Then, and for long afterwards, it was the rule, and not the exception, for matches to be played for large stakes and for heavy wagers to be decided by the result. In these circumstances it was only natural that the Bishops should not approve of the game, and that Miss Mitford should deliver herself of a denunciation of "making the noble game of cricket an affair of bettings and hedgings, and maybe of cheatings."

It is gratifying to know that many eminent Churchmen were partial to the game in their youth. Good Bishop Ken, a friend of Izaak Walton (the Father of Angling), was born in 1637 and educated at Winchester, and, whilst there, "is found attempting to wield a cricket bat." At least so says the Rev. W. Lisle Bowles, as quoted in Timbs's *School Days of Eminent Men*. Thomas Ken was a boy at Winchester in 1656, and his name is still to be seen cut out on stone in the College cloisters with that date annexed to it. He attended Charles II on his death-bed, and it was to him the king apologized for being "such an unconscionable long time in dying." He is now best known as the author of our favourite morning and evening hymns. Christopher Wordsworth, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, was captain of Winchester, and his brother, Charles Wordsworth, in later years Bishop of St. Andrews, was for five years in the Harrow Eleven. In 1825, when Harrow and Winchester met for the first time, the brothers were the rival captains. Not only were there two future Bishops in the elevens, but Henry Edward Manning, afterwards the famous Cardinal, played for Harrow, and Christopher Wordsworth often recalled with interest in later years that he "caught out Manning." At Oxford Manning was for a time a private pupil of

Charles Wordsworth, who on one occasion sent him a cricket bat with a poetical epistle. Wordsworth received in reply a similar epistle in twelve stanzas from Manning, of which the following is a specimen:

> The bat that you were kind enough to send,
> Seems (for as yet I have not tried it) good;
> And if there's anything on earth can mend
> My wretched play, it is that piece of wood.

The future Bishop, on reading the verses, is said to have remarked with demure sarcasm that they "foreshadow a mind capable of making strong statements on insufficient evidence."

The Cardinal at all times referred to his cricket at Harrow with the greatest pleasure, and throughout his life took an interest in the game. He is reported to have asked one of his priests, "Would you like to enter heaven with a chalice in one hand and a cricket bat in the other?" which recalls an impromptu epigram by an Irish versifier:

> When all the nations throng the judgment hill,
> Where Peter, with his great keys, guards the wicket,
> England, in lazy flannels lounging, will
> Question the Fisherman: "Did you play cricket?"

The late Mr. George W. E. Russell has told how, on July 15, 1888, being the first day of the Eton and Harrow match at Lord's, a few old Harrovians of different generations met at a Harrow dinner. The Cardinal, who had just turned eighty, was invited. He declined to dine on the ground that he never dined out, but he would on no account forgo the opportunity of meeting the members of his old school, and he recalled with pride that he had been for two years in the Harrow Eleven. He appeared as soon as dinner was over, gallantly faced the cloud of cigar smoke,

was in his very best vein of anecdote and reminiscence, and stayed till the party broke up. A few years before his death he expressed a wish that an account of his career should appear in *Scores and Biographies*, and one was accordingly inserted.

It is, by the way, of interest to recall that the Sixth Form game of 1823–4 at Harrow comprised among its players a future Cardinal (Manning), an Archbishop (R. C. Trench), three Bishops (Perry, Charles Wordsworth and Oxenden), and a Dean (Merivale).

The Rev. J. C. Ryle, who appeared for Eton against Harrow and Winchester in 1833 and 1834, and for Oxford against Cambridge in 1836 and 1838, was afterwards Bishop of Liverpool, and wrote innumerable pamphlets. John Coleridge Patteson, of Eton and Oxford, was murdered in 1871 by the savages of Nukapu, near the island of St. Cruz, being then Bishop of Melanesia—a title held later by the old Kent cricketer, Cecil Wilson. All students of the game, too, will remember how C. T. Studd, one of the best of amateur players, suddenly abandoned participating in great matches in order to become a missionary in China. He believed that he would not be obliged to master the intricate Chinese language, but that he would miraculously receive the gift of that tongue. Although so far removed from his native land, he occasionally played, but always in Chinese dress and pigtail, as he had adopted the native costume in accordance with the rules of the mission of which he was a member.

Who is there would be so bold as to state that such men as Ken, Charles Wordsworth, Manning, Christopher Wordsworth, Ryle, Henry Lascelles Jenner (a former Bishop of Dunedin), Patteson, Studd and Wilson have not derived a considerable measure of their success in life from indulging when young in cricket, which is

capable of endowing players with many fine qualities, of which unselfishness is one of the most marked? At the present time many of the clergy are numbered amongst the most enthusiastic supporters of the game. In Bow Church, on April 13, 1915, the Bishop of Lincoln said: "Thank God for our English games! They have taught us how to be good-tempered in defeat, generous in victory; they have taught us how to 'play the game.'" Elevens composed entirely of Church of England ministers often take the field; it is, in fact, well known that such a team has more than once been drawn entirely from the clergy attached to St. Mary's, Southsea.

That cricket is a game from which great benefits, both moral and physical, can be derived is evident to everybody who has more than a passing acquaintance with the pastime. About fifty years ago a member of the Church Congress, speaking at Croydon, urged the country parson not to refuse his place as an active member of the parish eleven, "for so shall he find that the fine hit to leg, which opened the mouths of the rustic spectators on the Saturday, will leave them a little open on the Sunday morning; and that he whom the parson has taught to twist will be the more ready to listen to his dissuasives from tortuous conduct." In this respect a story is told of a miner who, after being on most unfriendly terms with his Vicar for many years, one day asked him to visit him, as he had met with a severe accident. After several visits the clergyman had the curiosity to inquire the motive which had dispelled his antipathy. "Oh," said the miner, "that hit o' yourn to square-leg for six a fortnight ago converted me." The force of the remark can be understood when it is added that at the time the hit was made the miner had placed himself on the

leg side within a few feet of the ecclesiastic. Remembering the above incident, one can sympathize with the Rector who said that what the parish wanted was not a theologian, but a fast bowler with a break from the off. A hit for six, or a good bowling feat, may at times effect as much good as an Archbishop's sermon.

Probably the best cricketing clergyman there has ever been was Lord Frederick Beauclerk, the greatest all-round player in the world just over a hundred years ago, and for twenty-two years Vicar of Redbourne. Lord Frederick was of a very choleric nature, and, if things did not go altogether to his liking, would express himself in far from pacific terms. Living in times far different from the present, he did not think it derogatory to arrange money matches, both at cricket and running. He once served Mr. E. H. Budd so shabby a trick that the latter, good fellow though he was, could not help stating that "Lord Frederick's behaviour was most unbecoming in a man in Holy Orders." In 1818, as is generally known, the famous "Squire" Osbaldeston, in a sudden fit of rage caused by being defeated at single wicket, erased his name from the list of members of the M.C.C., and in so doing obliterated the only two other names beginning with "O." In later years Osbaldeston regretted his hasty act, and asked his friend Budd to wait on Lord Frederick and Mr. William Ward, two leading members of the Club, in order to see whether he could not induce them to place his name again on the books. Ward was agreeable, but Lord Frederick, who had a spite against the Squire, would not countenance such a thing—"The insult was too great . . . etc., etc." Budd told Osbaldeston the result of his visit in the presence of a clergyman, a mutual friend, who remarked, *à propos* of Lord Frederick's attitude: "I should not have thought his

Lordship capable of so mean an act—and he a D.D. too!" Osbaldeston's terse and enigmatical reply was simply, "D.D. can stand for many things besides Doctor of Divinity."

Lord Frederick made no secret of the fact that he reckoned to make six hundred guineas a year out of the game. He was, too, a hunting parson of the old school, and his parishioners, knowing his great interest in sport, were probably not surprised when his clerk, Moody, announced one Sunday morning, before giving out the hymn, that "The Vicar is going on Friday to the throwing-off of the Leicestershire hounds, and cannot return home until the following Monday. Therefore next Sunday there will not be any service in this church." This recalls the fact that about forty years ago a worthy Canon, then nearer ninety than eighty in age, used to tell the following story relating to his younger days. "One Sunday morning," he would say, "upon being asked by the clerk in the vestry how I was, I replied that I felt very upset, for my cricket bat, which I had used at Eton, had been lost or stolen, and in a thoughtless moment added that I wouldn't have lost it for five pounds. As soon as the service commenced I forgot all about the matter, but it was suddenly recalled to me by hearing the silly fellow begin to give out the Church notices by announcing: 'Parson says as 'ow some bloke 'as stole 'is cricket bat. He wants it back, and will pay five pounds for it.' On my return home I mentioned the incident to my wife, who said at once that she had put the bat in an oak chest, thinking I should not require it again that year. The publicity made me very uncomfortable at the time, but I can afford to laugh at the incident now, after an interval of fifty years."

The Rev. T. A. Anson was in his day a wonderful wicket-keeper, who earned immortality in the match at Lord's between Gentlemen and Players, in 1843, by stumping G. Butler off one of Alfred Mynn's tremendous shooters, using the left hand only; C. G. Lane, whom Richard Daft described as one of the best amateur batsmen he had ever seen, was a prominent member of the famous Surrey team of the sixties; E. Elmhirst, who was always being told by his candid friends that if he could preach as well as he could play cricket he would one day become an Archbishop, was a brilliant wicket-keeper; William Ridding, who also excelled behind the wicket, appeared with success for Winchester, Oxford and the Gentlemen, and in the match against the Players, in 1849, stumped Joe Guy off one of Harvey Fellows's terrific deliveries; E. H. Pickering, a celebrated old Etonian, was once called upon so suddenly to bat in a Gentlemen *v.* Players match at Lord's that he was obliged to go to the wicket in clerical garb; H. B. Biron, the first man to score as many as two hundred runs in an innings in Sussex, and a pupil of Fuller Pilch, was for many years a valuable member of the Kent Eleven, both with bat and ball; and R. T. King, a great boxing enthusiast, was the most famous of points. The foregoing are the names of but a very few of the many clergymen who have achieved success on the cricket field; the list could be considerably extended were there any necessity to do so. Canon McCormick, to whom reference has already been made, held a curious record for one in Holy Orders, for he could state that he once gained the verdict over Nat Langham, the only man who ever beat Tom Sayers. He was frequently told in chaff, in consequence, that he had missed his vocation, and that instead of being a clergyman he

should have adopted "the Ring" as a profession. Amongst cricket historians the Rev. James Pycroft occupies an honoured place; whilst the Rev. Robert Stratten Holmes, the author of the greater part of the official chronicle of Yorkshire cricket, is the possessor of one of the best cricket libraries in the world.

Whether cricket should or should not be indulged in on Sundays is a subject on which various opinions have been expressed. In past times, when the population of the country was far less than it is now, when each village was a small world in itself and had little intercourse with the towns even of its own county, and before the railways had spread an iron network in every direction, Sunday cricket was not only frequently played on the village greens, but was commended by people whose opinion was entitled to respect and whose influence was great. The famous Dr. Parr, with his pipe and jug, used to sit on the green at Hatton, in Warwickshire, on Sunday afternoons, watching his parish lads play at cricket, the absentees from church not being allowed to take part. The public-houses were deserted, and it is recorded that there was no better-conducted parish than the Doctor's. (It was Parr, the friend of Johnson and Sheridan, who, when his first wife killed his favourite cat, retaliated by cutting the throat of her parrot.)

In *Our Village* Miss Mitford, who loved the game, gives a charming description of Sunday afternoon practice, every word of which, even at this distance of time, tempts one to quotation. In *The Life of Charles Kingsley*, too, edited by his wife, mention is made of the fact that the Sunday afternoons in his parish, Eversley, Hampshire, used to be devoted to cricket by the young men of the neighbourhood. The "muscular Christian's" remarks to his own son respecting the

fact was to the effect that the players, chiefly agricultural labourers, had no time in the week for the pursuit of the king of games. About forty years ago Canon Benham, in the course of some very interesting notes on early cricket, referred in the following words to Sunday cricket being played in his native village: "There was always play on Sunday evenings. The young men used to take their bats and stumps to church and deposit them in the belfry till afternoon service was over, after which the adjournment to the field took place. I know a good many decent people who will say, 'And a very good thing too.' Well, this I think I may fairly say: They were dressed in their best, and very natty and respectable they looked in their white frocks and beaver hats, with their sweethearts to look on. It was a gala evening when the weather was warm and bright, and they were on their good behaviour, and I do not remember any riotous conduct or drunkenness arising out of it all, any more than I have seen in the Champs Élysées on a Sunday evening; but I am decidedly in favour of the English quiet Sunday all the same. In the next village the old parson used to stand in his field, which adjoined the cricket meadow, and look on with interest, pipe in mouth. Many of my readers probably have heard the story of that most genial—if somewhat eccentric—Archdeacon down in the West, now a hale and lively old man of eighty-five or thereabouts, who went away for a Sunday, having entrusted his parish to a neighbour. When he came back, his friend reported: "Capital congregation and very well-behaved, but I am very sorry to tell you that after church they all went off to cricket." "Of course they did," was the reply, "and if I had been here I should have gone with them."

How different was this dear old Archdeacon from the Vicar of Maidstone in the reign of Charles the First! In *The Life and Death of Tho. Wilson*, Minister of Maidstone, published anonymously[1] in 1672, occurs the following passage (p. 40): "Maidstone was formerly a very profane town, inasmuch as I have seen Morrice-dancing, Cudgel playing, Stoolball, Crickets, and many other sports openly and publickly on the Lord's Day." Thomas Wilson, who was born in 1601 and died in or about 1653, refused to publish the *Book of Sports on the Lord's Day* in his church on Sundays when commanded to do so. It must be remembered, however, that not until very long afterwards was cricket generally considered a fit game for gentlemen. In *Annals of the West Kent Cricket Club* Mr. Philip Norman records that the Rev. John Lockwood, a very enthusiastic player a hundred years ago, held some Church preferment at Coulsdon or in its immediate neighbourhood, and eventually gave up cricket because members of his congregation were always asking him in the churchyard on Sunday if he would play in a match on the Monday, which he thought lowered his dignity as a clergyman.

On several occasions proceedings have been taken against persons for participating in the game on Sundays. As far back as November 20, 1817, several persons "who had long resisted the threats and entreaties of the inhabitants of Old Buckenham," were convicted before a magistrate at Larlingford (Norfolk) and fined for playing cricket on Sunday, October 2nd, on Old Buckenham Green.

Of more interest, however, is the following, recorded on the last page but one in a volume of Accounts of

[1] The author was Mr. George Swinnocke.

the Churchwarden and Overseers for the parish of Eltham, 1625–55 :

This year 1654 { An account of all such moneys as hath been receyved for misdemenrs of whom & howe disposed of

Cricket players on y^e Lords Day	Rec^d	of Francis Clayford	2^s
		of Edw. Layton	2^s
		of John Poole	2^s
		of Will Foxe	2^s
		of Will Starbrock	2^s
		Widd Roodes sonne	2^s

As far on as 1821 action was taken against five cricketers for playing at Charlton on a Sunday. Each was fined 3s. 4d. Three paid the sum, but the other two preferred to be placed in the stocks for three hours, " agreeably to the Act of Charles I."

In more recent times summonses have been issued for the same cause at places so wide apart as Leicester (in 1885), Dublin (in 1894), and Sydney, New South Wales (in 1897). On August 15, 1843, Lord John Manners, in the House of Commons, drew the attention of the Attorney-General to the fact that it was a common custom in some parts of England for the men and boys of a village to play a friendly game of cricket upon the village green on a Sunday evening. A certain " saintly person," said Lord John, desired to end this practice, so brought six boys (each earning seven shillings a week) who had thus played before a country justice, who sentenced each to three shillings and costs, the whole fine amounting to fifteen shillings in each case. The boys pleaded their inability to pay the sum, which was done for them by a charitably disposed person. The Attorney-General said that if the boys were playing in their own parish the conviction was illegal ; if not, then it could be supported. The lads proceeded

The *Sabbath-Breakers*; Or, *Young-Man's* Dreadful Warning-Piece.

Being a very dismal Account of four Young-Men, who made a Match to Play at Cricket, on *Sunday* the *6th* of this Instant *July* 1712. in a Meadow near *Maiden Head-Thicket*; and as they were at Play, there rose out of the Ground, a Man in Black with a Cloven-Foot, which put them in a great Consternation; but as they stood in this Frighted Condition, the Devil flew up in the Air, in a Dark Cloud with Flashes of Fire, and in his Room he left a very Beautiful Woman, and *Robert Yates* and *Richard Moore* hastily stepping up to her, being Charm'd with her Beauty went to Kiss her, but in the Attempt they instantly fell down Dead.

The other two, *Simon Jackson* and *George Grantham*, seeing this Tragical Sight, ran home to *Maiden Head*, where they now lye in a Distracted Condition.

Also the Minister of *Maiden-Head* Pray'd with them frequently his Prayer is here at Large, and likewise his Sermon which he Preach'd the *Sunday* following, the Text is *Remember the Sabbath-Day, to Keep it Holy.* Exod. 20. ver. 8.

against, it may be added, belonged to Hurley, in Berkshire, and had only Sunday for recreation.

There exists at least one copy of a pamphlet of twenty pages which tells in detail the serious consequences which befell four young men through playing near Maidenhead on Sunday, July 6, 1712. Two of them fell dead on the spot, while the others ran home, "where they now lye in a Distracted Condition." The writer referred to cricket as a "Hellish Pastime," and stated that the dead boys were found with "their Faces looking black, their Hair singed, their Skin looking as if it was scorch'd, and stunk most nauseously of Sulphur and Brimstone. From hence they were brought home, and after the Coroner and Jury had sat upon their Corps, whose untimely Ends they imputed to the just Judgment of God, for prophaning his Holy Sabbath, they were both interr'd in one grave together." The other boys recovered after being insensible for four days!

In a village in which the incumbent is a really enthusiastic cricketer the game is almost certain to flourish and the intercourse of the inhabitants to be more genial than could possibly be the case otherwise. I have heard of more than one hamlet becoming so fond of the game, owing to the good example set by the Rector or Vicar, that when the eleven go away to play a match they are accompanied by so many of the villagers that only the babies and old women remain at home. By mixing thus with his flock, the priest is able to become most intimately acquainted with all that concerns their welfare, and so is able to prove an excellent friend to them.

And what curious experiences some country clergymen can relate of their village cricket! One of the most amusing concerns the Vicar who went in when

six wickets were down for about a dozen runs and carried out his bat for sixty, winning the game for his side almost single-handed. On his way to the tent, with honours thick upon him, he was greeted by the following remark from a parishioner, a day labourer, who was almost dancing for joy at the victory: "Lor', Parson, what a man ye be! Ye saved us all last Sunday, and now ye've come an' saved us on a Saturday!"

Occasionally a clergyman has been criticized by some of his flock for his interest in the game. Such an experience befell the Rev. F. H. Gillingham in 1912 whilst Vicar of Holy Trinity, Bordesley, Birmingham. It then became known generally that he had displeased some of his parishioners by playing cricket, which, they declared, took him long distances from his parish. In reply to his critics Mr. Gillingham said that, instead of taking six weeks' holiday at a stretch, as many Vicars did, he proposed taking three days at a time. This meant that all his Sundays would be spent at home. He added that cricket was a distinct asset to him, as wherever he went he was spoken of as the Essex cricketer, and that since he had been their Vicar he had collected £300 from cricketers and lovers of the game, and that without it he could not have carried on the parish. If he found his cricket a hindrance rather than a help in his work he would give it up, but he believed the majority of his parishioners realized that his cricket was an asset.

It is not usual to hear the game referred to from the pulpit, but a visitor to a certain church near London about twenty years ago noticed one peculiarity during the service which struck him as being remarkable. The clerk preceded the hymn immediately before the sermon with two announcements, as follows: "The members of the cricket club connected with this

congregation will meet for the transaction of business to-morrow evening at seven o'clock. The usual prayer meeting on Friday at seven-thirty." The clerk who blended Christianity and cricket so delightfully was indeed a sportsman quite of F. G.'s creed. As recently as 1893 a clergyman announced from the pulpit of his church, in Hampshire: "On Saturday next we play the return cricket match with T—— (a neighbouring village). I shall umpire on that occasion, when I trust that our united endeavours will meet with success." His expression was certainly an ambiguous one, recalling to mind the fact that it takes a strong eleven to play a side with a twelfth man.

The late Mr. Charles Box related that the Rev. Disturnall, Rector of Wormshill (Kent), saw on a Sabbath two bats and six stumps in one corner of the church. "Before I begin my sermon," said he, "I wish to know whose bats are those which have been brought in the church." "Please, Parson, they be Bill Burgis's," answered a young rustic. "Bill Burgis's! Oh, well, let them be, for he's too lazy to break the Sabbath with them, for the parish know better than to set him to break stones even." Such a proceeding would doubtless have prevented many enthusiasts from following the sermon as carefully as the preacher would have wished, for even occurrences of far less prominence have often distracted a worshipper's attention and caused his thoughts to wander cricketwards.[1] "The Old Buffer" once furnished an instance showing with what ease a cricketer's thoughts can be drawn from the service. He wrote: "It is Sunday, and I have been to church. Always learn something, you know,

[1] It has been stated that the only qualification possessed by a certain player, who appeared for Surrey regularly about fifty years ago, was that he had sittings in Farnham Parish Church.

by so doing, as I did to-day. An old cove like a parrot always kept a word or two in front of the parson, and I thought to myself, he is '*taking the ball in front of the wicket*, and it is *not* fair.' Umpires of England, attend —some wicket-keepers do this occasionally—*watch* them." (By the way, was it not "The Old Buffer" who, years and years ago, disturbed the devotions of an old lady by audibly remarking that *Bell's Life* was stake-holder?)

When Hambledon was the centre of the cricketing world, with John Small and Tom Sueter its special heroes, one wonders whether the numerous lovers of the game who attended service on Sundays did so chiefly to hear the former play the double bass and to gaze upon the edifice which the latter had recently restored or repaired. When a famous cricketer takes a prominent part in the service, the latter must always appear to the enthusiasts far more interesting than it would otherwise have been.

It would be instructive to know in how many of the old parish registers cricket is mentioned. There is a well-known reference to the game in the Chailey (Sussex) parish register of 1737—"John Boots, killed at Newick by running against another man on crossing the wicket. Buried May 14"—but in how many other such books is the game alluded to? Sermons on the game have occasionally been heard. As far back as 1837, on the eve of a match between Kent and Sussex, the Vicar of West Malling denounced from the pulpit as sinners all those who attended to witness the play, whether they betted or not. In 1883 the Rev. Mr. Mercer, of Ballarat, preached a cricket sermon, taking his text from Ephesians v, 13; whilst a few years ago the Rev. W. Carlile, of London, discoursed on "MacLaren's Centuries," "Surrey's New Bowler," "C. B. Fry," and "Warner

or MacLaren?" In March 1903, at Christ Church, Crowborough, Sussex, the Rev. G. Hugh Jones preached a sermon entitled "L.b.w.: a Parable of the Cricket Field," taking his text from St. Matthew xiii, 34. Amongst the famous players who have had reference to the game made on their tombstones may be mentioned William Lillywhite, Cobbett, Mr. John Willes ("He was a patron of all manly sports and the first to introduce round-arm bowling in cricket"), Fuller Pilch, Mr. Alfred Mynn, Richard Daft, John Summers, Tom Humphrey, Harry Jupp, George Lohmann, Arthur Shrewsbury, Alfred Shaw, Mr. A. N. Hornby and Barlow. In Holy Trinity Church, Marylebone, is a stained-glass window to the memory of an Harrovian, Second Lieutenant L. S. G. Jones, of the Monmouthshire Regiment, who died of wounds in June 1917, aged nineteen. The School crest and buildings are prominent in the design, which also includes three figures each about three feet in length. The one in the centre is allegorical—of a soldier holding a broken sword. The others portray a young Harrovian, the one on the left wearing a wide Harrow straw hat and reading a book, and that on the right in flannels and blazer with a cricket ball in his right hand and a cricket bat in his left. Possibly the memorial is unique: certainly it is very beautiful.

One can understand an old cricketer expressing a wish, as John Bowyer, of Mitcham, did, that his bat should be buried with him, especially when he is in constant company with it and regards it as a friend. His bat was nailed to his coffin lid. Daniel Day, of Surrey and Hampshire, when he died left directions that his bat (worm-eaten with age), pads and walking-stick should be buried with him, which was done. Johnny Mullagh, a member of the Australian aboriginal

team which visited England in 1868, died at Harrow, in Australia, in August 1891, and on his coffin was placed his bat and a set of stumps decorated with the Harrow colours. Harry Bagshaw, of Derbyshire, was buried in his umpire's coat and with a cricket ball in his hand. Still more extraordinary was the proceeding which took place at the funeral of Richard May, a prominent member of the Kent Eleven of one hundred and fifty years ago. His dying request to George Ring was that he (Ring) would kill his favourite dog and bury it with him. This was done, despite the remonstrance of the officiating clergyman on the score of sacrilege. This tempts one to ask what would have happened if Mr. Alfred D. Taylor had left directions that, on his decease, his cricket collection should be buried with him. A family vault would certainly have been necessary for the purpose, but would the authorities have sanctioned it?

Canon Benham used to relate an interesting tale concerning the late Archdeacon Harrison. "That very pleasant old man had a nephew who was reckoned the 'lion-hitter' of Kent, and he had indoctrinated his uncle with a love of cricket; and I found my bedroom walls covered with cricket scores. It is said that during the Canterbury Cricket Week the worthy Archdeacon's pony-chaise stood waiting at the door. The news would come down to the Archdeacon in his study busy with the Fathers, 'Mr. Charles just a-goin' in, Sir,' and down went the pen, and away went the Archdeacon in time to see the nephew's performance." Such enthusiasts deserve to reach a ripe age, like Canon Beadon, who died in 1879 at the patriarchal age of 101 years and six months. The Canon had managed the Bullingdon Club, at Oxford, with Stephen Lushington, afterwards the famous judge. He and his father

held the living of North Stoneham for more than 118 years.

A few years ago an experience was related concerning a schoolboy captain who was a very great believer in the efficacy of prayer. He did not go to such lengths as a French Princess of the Revolution period who, even if she dropped a ball of wool, would fall on her knees and pray that she might be able to reach far enough to recover it without being obliged to ring for a servant to move a small article of furniture beneath which it had rolled; but on the night before the match against the Town—the chief fixture of the season—he prayed earnestly that victory might be his. And his request was granted, much to the surprise of his opponents, the majority of whom were duly impressed by his explanation. Strange to say, after the return game had ended in a tie, the Town captain stated that he also had invoked Divine aid, and that, in the circumstances, the result was the only one possible. The School leader readily accepted the statement, but his young followers made no secret of the fact that they considered their opponent had not been "playing the game" in benefiting from their captain's idea, which they appeared to regard as copyright.

Mr. J. M. Framjee Patel, in *Stray Thoughts on Indian Cricket*, has shown that appeals by cricketers for supernatural aid are not confined to Englishmen. Some Parsi players told him that, when they were in a corner and badly wanted to draw a match, they prayed and invoked the help of the elements, and that a thunderstorm came to their rescue, stopping play and causing the match to be drawn. If such a practice became at all common in this country, the M.C.C. would doubtless find it necessary to issue an official recommendation worded somewhat as follows:

In the best interests of the game cricketers are earnestly requested to rely solely on their skill to ensure success, and in no circumstances to appeal for supernatural aid. This is not intended to apply to those clergy of the Church of England who may be directed by their Bishop, for the general welfare, to pray for rain.

This may not come to pass during the time of the present generation, but, on the ground that "anything can happen at cricket," such a declaration may be deemed advisable at some date which no good purpose would be served in forecasting.

The oldest score extant of a first-class match is that of Kent *v.* England in the Artillery Ground, London, in June 1744. In his poetical description of the game, James Love, the comedian, describes how the mighty Richard Newland, of Sussex, the best batsman of his time, skied a ball and prayed that it might not be caught:

> O mighty *Jove*! and all ye Pow'rs above!
> Let my regarded Pray'r your Pity move!
> Grant me but this. Whatever Youth shall dare
> Snatch at the Prize, descending thro' the Air;
> Lay him extended on the grassy Plain,
> And make his bold, ambitious Effort vain.

Newland may have been an excellent judge of cricket, but he blundered sadly in seeking help from Jove and his attendant gods and goddesses. What could *they* be expected to know of the game? Hence it is not surprising to learn that he fell to Lord John Sackville, who, although he slipped in his eagerness to obtain the coveted wicket, brought off a sensational catch in the long-field.

The above recalls an incident which occurred in a Surrey *v.* Kent match at Gravesend about a century and a quarter later. Old "Farmer" Bennett was in

with Mr. C. I. Thornton, and Southerton was bowling to the big hitter. "Jimmy" bowled him one with too much break. Thornton rushed out to it, but missed it, while Pooley also missed stumping him for the same reason—that he could not get near enough to the ball. Southerton turned round to Bennett and asked: "What shall I bowl him this time, George?"

"Don't know, Jim, I'm sure," said Bennett; "he do look so precious wild, you'd better leave it to Providence."

Southerton decided to leave it to Providence, on the "Farmer's" recommendation, but Providence did not interfere that time at any rate, for the ball was sent out of the ground, over several streets, and a new one was called for as it could not be found.

It is no light matter for a person to be a psychist. He is apt to "see things" at inconvenient moments. A friend who is psychic once had a remarkable experience whilst playing in a match. He had batted well for about an hour, and then suddenly was bowled neck and heels by a fast ball which he did not attempt to play. Various people asked him how it happened, but I was the only person to whom he would give the true explanation. He was afraid of being chaffed unmercifully, and so withheld the actual reason from others, contenting himself by saying that he did not see the ball. That statement was correct, but it was also the fact that just as the ball left the bowler's hand he saw a ghost suddenly appear close to the non-striker and begin to run down the wicket. The figure vanished after travelling a few yards, but in the meantime the stumps had been shattered. No one else on the field being psychic, the form was seen only by the striker.

An overheard remark to the effect that, Mr. Warner's devotion to the game being what it is, his ghost will probably haunt Lord's (every daisy on which he is said to know well enough to address by its Christian name) provided food for thought. Mr. Andrew Lang, in a footnote in Chapter I of the Badminton volume, says: "There is just one story of a ghost at a cricket match. He took great interest in the game, and went home in a dog-cart, as it seemed to the spectators, though he (the real man, not the wraith) was on his death-bed at a considerable distance. The spectral dog-cart is the puzzle of the Psychical Society. The scene of the apparition was the cricket ground of a public school." It would be interesting to have more details of the incident, and to know the identity of the ground.

A curious story has been told of Baynards Park, Ewhurst, Surrey, which belonged in turn to the Evelyn, Sidney and More families. A traveller relates that, on arriving there, he looked in vain for an entrance, but came at last to a door on each side of which a bundle of furze stood for a mat, while a piece of iron near by did duty for a rapper. "Within was a large gallery at the top of the house, and here I was assured an annual cricket match was played between the men of Rudgwick and Crawley; a more inconvenient spot I can hardly imagine. A ghost walks here in the form of an old woman, carrying her head in a basket, while over the whole place was a savage obscurity and vastness that was extremely striking." Let us hope that, if the ghost of Mr. Warner is destined to take up its abode at Lord's, its head will always be found firmly fixed in its right position. One trembles to think what "Plum's" feelings would be were he condemned to haunt the ground without ever being able to watch the play owing to his head being in a

basket. It would surely be better to be "finally settled" in a stout oaken box a few feet underground.

Francis Thompson, in a poem which deserves to be better known than it is, has told how—

> It is seldom I repair to the matches of the Southron folk,
> Though my own red roses there may blow;
> It is little I repair to the matches of the Southron folk,
> Though the red roses crest the caps I know.
> For the field is full of shades as I near the shadowy coast,
> And a ghostly batsman plays to the bowling of a ghost,
> And I look through my tears on a soundless clapping host,
> As the run-stealers flicker to and fro,
> To and fro,
> O my Hornby and my Barlow long ago!

It is, of course, in fiction that cricket and ghosts are chiefly associated, and in *The Light Side of Cricket*, edited by Mr E. B. V. Christian, is to be found what is perhaps the best of all narratives of that kind in a chapter entitled "Ghosts at Lord's," by Campbell Viney.

CHAPTER X

SLOW SCORING IN THE OLDEN TIME

FASHIONS alter in cricket, as in less important matters, and in no respect have the changes been of more interesting a nature than as regards the rate of scoring. In the very early days, when the bowling was fast and all along the ground, and the bat curved at the end like a hockey-stick, everything favoured a short life and a merry one, and run-getting was consequently brisk. Naturally, scores were small, and it happened not infrequently that as many as forty wickets fell in the course of a single day. The death of Frederick Louis Prince of Wales in 1751, as the result of a blow in the side from a cricket ball, robbed the game of its most influential patron, and it was not until almost a couple of decades later that his loss ceased to be felt. By that time Hambledon had entered upon its period of greatness, and Hampshire, Kent and Surrey could each boast its own supporters; rivalry was very keen, and as often as not large sums of money depended on the results of the more important matches. It was, therefore, not unnatural that, as more than the honour of winning was involved, batsmen should redouble their care, and that, with attention being given to defence, run-getting should be less rapid than in earlier days. That such a change took place is evident from *The Kentish Cricketers: A Poem*, published in 1773, where, in reference to the Duke of Dorset, it is told how—

> *. . . Far unlike the modern Way*
> *Of blocking every Ball at Play,*

He firmly stands with Bat upright,
And strikes with his athletic Might;
Sends forth the Ball across the Mead,
And scores six Notches for the Deed.

If the truth could be known, it would probably be found that run-getting was very sedate in those times. In *Surry Triumphant, or the Kentish Men's Defeat*—another poem of the year 1773—what was regarded as a hard-hit innings on the part of Sir Horatio Mann was described thus:

He swung, 'till both his arms did ach,
His bat of season'd wood,
Till down his azure sleeves the sweat
Ran trickling like a flood.

It is somewhat disappointing to find that, despite all this heroic exertion, his score amounted to twenty-two only—a number which is frequently obtained nowadays off a single over without creating any sensation. When the conditions which governed the game in those days are taken into consideration, it is surprising to find that the players scored as well as they did. The wickets were as unlike those of modern times as possible, and the bowlers possessed an advantage to detail which cannot fail to make their present-day successors envious. In the old laws it was enacted that "The Party which goes from Home shall have the choice of the innings and the pitching of the wickets, which shall be pitched within thirty yards of a centre fixed by the adversaries. When the parties meet at a third place, the bowlers shall toss up for the pitching of the first wicket and the choice of going in." In *The Kentish Cricketers* we are told how—

. . . Simmons sallied forth to pace
The level Turf, the fairest Place:
Candor, the KENTISH Sportsmen taught
To pitch the WICKETS as he ought.

Other bowlers considered only themselves, and not their colleagues. Thus Lumpy, of Surrey, would invariably choose the ground where his balls would shoot:

> For honest Lumpy did allow
> He ne'er could pitch but o'er a Brow.

Nothing pleased the old man so much as bowling down a wicket with a shooting ball. Like almost all the early underhand bowlers, he was very accurate, and seldom indeed can it have been that runs were obtained off him with anything approaching freedom.

No period of the last one hundred and fifty years of the game's history has been unmarked by the presence of a stonewaller of a very pronounced order, and, if everything that has been said and written of him is to be believed, the most persistent of them all was Tom Walker, a Surrey man and member of the Hambledon eleven. In a single-wicket match in 1786 between Six of Hambledon and Six of Kent the player named scored twenty-six and twelve. Epps's book, published at Rochester in 1799, records that "In the first innings T. Walker was in nearly five hours," and *Scores and Biographies* states that in his second he had 320 balls bowled to him. Bullen and Clifford were the hard-worked bowlers on that occasion, and one trembles to imagine how much slower the batsman would have been had he been opposed to the superior attack of David Harris. Only 169 runs were made in the whole match, but the play extended into the fourth day—a fact which prevents one from experiencing the slightest regret that single-wicket matches have long since ceased to be played and are never likely to return to favour. That Walker was nearly as steady as the Pyramids is almost beyond question; but was he really so much more pronounced a stonewaller than his contemporaries

as is generally believed? All early writers on the game are unanimous as to his slowness, and, judging from their remarks, one would imagine that he could not have scored more than one run out of four whilst in. Yet, if we refer to old scores, we find that he often obtained his fair share of the runs: thus in 1786 he made fifty-six of the 116 scored by Hambledon *v.* Kent and ninety-five of the 183 made by the White Conduit Club against the same county, whilst two years later he contributed ninety-three to a Surrey total of 197. Walker was "an unadulterated rustic," and this fact, coupled with his grotesque figure and his laboured running, may possibly have made him a butt for the jokes of comrades and opponents alike. It was, one may recall, when bowling against Tom Walker that Lord Frederick Beauclerk would get so angry when his best balls were repeatedly dropped down in front of the bat and would dash his hat upon the ground and call the batsman "a confounded old beast." "I do'ant care what ee zays," Tom would grunt in reply when one close by asked if he had heard what Lord Frederick had said.

Mention has been made of "the superior bowling of David Harris," and more than a passing word is due to the memory of that deserving man. He came upon the scene about 1782, and by introducing length bowling necessitated forward play and caused the shape of the bat to be changed from the old curved variety to one straight in the pod. His judgment and skill have long passed into a proverb. It is said that if eight or ten runs were made off him in an innings people would remark, "Why, David, something is wrong with you this morning." The alterations and improvements he effected introduced into batting a degree of science before undreamt of. Harris had imitators who, whilst

failing to attain his degree of excellence, showed a great advance upon earlier methods The whole game, in fact, underwent so great a change that it is from the time of Harris's appearance that modern cricket may be said to date. Bowling, it is true, was still underhand, but it possessed the great merit of being accurate; Mr. E. H. Budd did not bowl a wide in forty-five seasons, and there can be little doubt that for some years runs had almost to be fought for against the chief bowlers. That Boxall, the earliest commentator on the game, favoured careful play is apparent from his advice on the manner "to play or stop good bowling"—to play forward, to play back, and "to let the ball go without hitting." It is charitable to assume that Boxall's book enjoyed a great popularity among Sussex players, for of the 109 runs obtained in a match between North Sussex and South Sussex in 1802 as many as 106 were singles; Battcock, of the North, got a three, but whether the stroke included two or three overthrows is not recorded. It must have taken batsmen some little time to become accustomed to length bowling and the change in the shape of the bat, especially as it was about the same period that Lamborn, "The Little Farmer," discovered that it was possible to impart spin to the ball. But gradually batsmen gained the upper hand, runs came not only faster but in greater number, and whispers—occasional at first, but persistent later—of round-arm bowling were heard in the land.

Of the long struggle which took place between the supporters of round-arm and those of the old underhand but few words are necessary. Tom Walker, Mr. John Willes, Ashby, Mr. E. H. Budd and Lambert tried, but without success, to introduce the style, and it was left to William Lillywhite and James Broadbridge, of Sussex—ably supported by the ready pen

of Mr. G. T. Knight, of Kent—to effect the change. By 1827 the players had ceased to be puzzled by underhand, which had been killed by a lively style of hitting. Scoring had for some years ruled high—one may instance Lambert's two hundreds in a match and Mr. William Ward's 278, which ranked for more than a hundred years as the largest innings ever played at Lord's—and the increase in the size of the wicket in 1817 from 24 inches by 7 inches to 27 inches by 8 inches had no marked effect. Batsmen, in fact, had come to score with an ease never known before; all the world seemed May to them, and all the leaves were green. The introduction of the new system—styled by its advocates "The March of Intellect System"—caused a change in the game as pronounced as that brought about by the length bowling of Harris, for not only did scores decrease to a considerable extent, but the difference in the rate of run-getting was most marked. A careful perusal of the score-sheets of the period will show that many gentlemen who had been able to make fair totals against the old underhand could do little or nothing when opposed to the new style. The consequence was that many of them dropped out of the game—none too soon, if the truth must be told—whilst those who remained, trying to employ against the round-arm the free methods which had proved successful in previous years, had to be content with much diminished scores. They discovered, in short, that it was far easier when playing underhand, against which all their cricket had been played, than when opposed to the new style to realize the momentary ecstasy of a big hit; underhand did not rise and threaten the hands as much as the round-arm, and so could be played with more confidence and freedom. Some of the instances of slow scoring recorded just

after the introduction of round-arm make interesting reading. Thus, for Sussex *v.* Kent at Sevenoaks in 1827, T. Pierpoint is said to have batted seven and a half hours for thirty-one; for Sussex *v.* England at Lord's in 1833 H. Morley made only nine runs during the three hours he was in; and in 1838 J. Napper took a couple of hours to score seven for Sussex *v.* England at Brighton. It was not without a long struggle that those in favour of the reform gained their desire, nor was it for some years that their opponents were content to accept the altered conditions. How great a change the new order of things effected can be gauged from the fact that when there was a possibility of the M.C.C. re-establishing underhand bowling, Pilch, upon being asked his opinion, replied: "Why, gentlemen, if you put me in against it on Monday morning perhaps you might have me out on Saturday night." Yet in some quarters the new method was long in being exploited, and as far on as 1842, when the Manchester Club played the M.C.C. at Lord's, all their bowling was of the old underhand school, and, as *Bell's Life* stated, "afforded the M.C.C. Gentlemen much amusement in hitting it away."

It is not a little remarkable that Lillywhite should have been the greatest, as well as practically the earliest, of the round-arm bowlers, and that he should have been almost perfect in the art from the first. Runs were never made from him with anything approaching freedom, and, as it was quite the exception for any batsman to score well against him, some of his analyses must have been quite remarkable. To him more than to any other player must the slow scoring which came to be such a marked characteristic of first-class cricket be attributed. Pycroft has said that Lillywhite threw with one arm almost horizontal and much in the form

in which he bowled, and that it used to be a joke to place him in the long-field "to see Lilly bowl up the ball from the boundary." So nature had made his muscles to act conformably with that kind of delivery which others found so unnatural and consequently so difficult to acquire. His accuracy of pitch, his judgment and his power of changing both pace and elevation made him the finest bowler in the style he championed. "I bowls the best ball in England," he said, with more truth than modesty, "and Mr. Harenc"—a Harrow man—"the next." And again: "I suppose if I was to think every ball, they wouldn't ever get a run." "But," he added, "three balls out of four straight is what we calls *mediogrity*." In 1846 he created quite a sensation at Lord's by delivering a wide in a single-wicket match. *Scores and Biographies* remarked on the occurrence: "He said he 'bowled this wide because he had to wait so long in the field before Mr. C. G. Taylor came in,' during which time he kept handling the ball, which made it sticky, etc." Even when a very old man, for a cricketer, he had lost none of his precision, and when, in the last year of his life, he bowled to the Eton boys, a fag was told off to pick up and hand to him the ball, as he was unable to stoop for it himself. He was dreaded by opponents, even in the best matches, to the last, and in Gentlemen *v.* Players in 1847, after Hillyer and Dean had bowled without success, he and Clarke (aged fifty-five and forty-eight respectively) obtained all twenty wickets between them. The former's figures were 120 balls for thirty-six runs and eleven wickets, and when the strength of his opponents is taken into consideration one doubts whether the old man ever obtained a greater personal triumph.

Almost as great an adept at keeping down the runs and obtaining wickets was William Clarke, of Nottingham.

He belonged to the old underhand school, but lay by till the way to play it had been forgotten. When he took part in his first Gentlemen *v.* Players match he was forty-seven years of age, was not active enough to field his own bowling, and had been playing for thirty seasons. Yet he was never mastered to the last, though he played against such free batsmen as Pilch, Parr, Felix, Caffyn and Cæsar. It is true that in the Kent *v.* Nottingham match at Canterbury in 1845 Felix played a brilliant innings of fifty-four against him; but his triumph was short-lived. When in the return match at Trent Bridge a little later he went to the wicket he was greeted with cries of, "Here comes Clarke's master!" Felix, who had a weakness for playing to the gallery, took guard four yards in front of the wicket, Clarke being the bowler. The score-sheet reads: "N. Felix, Esq., b Clarke, 0." And "What," it may be asked, "was it that compelled Clarke's bowling to be treated with such respect?" He was very quick at finding out a man's weakness, and by change of elevation would vary his pace without the knowledge of the batsman. Caffyn said that it was his fast ball which made him difficult. "You couldn't see it coming until it was almost up to you, and it was the fear of this ball which made you hesitate to go out and hit the slow ones." Felix has left it on record that Clarke would walk round the ground while his adversaries were practising and make his observations. "Master Felix, I have summed them up. I value them at (say) seventy; that's their mark." Or again: "That gentleman practising yonder is ready money to me; I see his loose screw." "And often," said Felix, "after one or two balls he would whisper to me at point, 'Now there will be a haccident,' and, true enough, the batsman was soon on his way to the

tent." Clarke was a foxy-headed, cocksure individual, and doubtless his temperament had not a little to do with his success.

But the extreme accuracy of Lillywhite and Clarke cannot be held wholly responsible for the slow scoring which marked the game during their career. There were, in fact, several other causes, the chief of which may be touched upon briefly. In the first place, conditions had, except for a very short period, favoured bowlers, much as in modern times they have batsmen, and the rate of run-getting chronicled in connection with present-day cricket would have been impossible of attainment in early times. Probably even Hobbs and Mr. Spooner would have found it no easy matter to score rapidly against Lillywhite, Clarke and others on the kind of wicket upon which they were accustomed to bowl. The heavy roller and lawn mower were luxuries unknown, and batsmen of other days attached almost as much importance to style as to effect. "Elegance, all elegance, Joe Guy; fit to play in a drawing-room before Her Majesty," used to be said of a famous Nottingham player, who was understood to sacrifice his run-getting so that he might exhibit his powers of defence. In those days it was considered bad cricket to hit a straight ball, unpardonable to pull a slow long hop, and nothing less than a sin to run in to slow bowling and "give her the rush." (It is a fact that in 1847 a promising Sussex player named Sopp, then only twenty-three years of age, was left out of the county eleven and never engaged again solely because he ran in at a ball from Clarke and, missing it, was stumped.) Then, too, batsmen had far fewer strokes than now—almost every player of note made a speciality of some particular hit—and in consequence a discerning captain could set his field so that it became

no easy matter for the batsman to get the ball through. If one may rely on what one has read and been told, the old cricketers were invariably very keen in the field. They could certainly throw better and farther than their successors of to-day, for the reason that when they flourished there were no boundaries from which the ball could be returned by an obliging spectator or a kindly policeman. That all hits had to be run out would in itself do much to account for the fact that run-getting was so much slower than it is to-day, and when it is remembered how rough the wickets used to be it is surprising to find that batsmen made as many runs as they did. Steady play was generally expected for the reason that it proved most remunerative in the end. When Lord Charles Russell gave up playing he wrote to his son Henry: "My last match was creditable —eight singles well but slowly got. . . . I took off my cap when I received the applause of the pavilion." A slowly played innings by a veteran is always excusable, but it is, even at this distance of time, difficult to forgive Edgar Willsher for taking nearly four hours to make twenty runs for Kent and Surrey against England at Canterbury in 1855. A long, hard-hit innings was so seldom seen in first-class cricket that a man who succeeded in playing one was likely to gain a reputation to outlive him. Does not one even now associate Mr. Reginald Hankey's name with his seventy for Gentlemen *v.* Players at Lord's in 1857, and that of Mr. John Walker with his ninety-eight in the match between the same sides at the Oval five years later?

If we refer to the early books on the game we find that the advice tendered to young cricketers generally dealt as much with keeping their wickets intact as obtaining runs. William Lillywhite, in his *Handbook*, remarked, "If you once give way to running in to hit

you will never make a safe or a steady player," and in his *Young Cricketer's Guide*, published five years later (in 1849): "A few days' practice, without one risk intentionally, will take off all unsteady propensity when in a game. Stepping in to hit is a style of play that many have tried, though but few have found it answer; never leave the ground to play at any ball." Felix said it was "anti-cricket like to rush in to the slow-paced ball." Nowadays every cricketer knows that running in demoralizes slow bowlers on any wicket, and on a bad one often wins a match. Pycroft certainly said that "Mere stopping balls and poking about in the blockhole is not cricket, however successful"; but he added immediately: "And I must admit that one of the most awkward, poking, vexatious blockers that ever produced a counterfeit of cricket defied Bayley and Cobbett at Oxford in 1836 three hours, and made five-and-thirty runs." One feels that the author of *The Cricket Field* weakened his case by the incident he narrated, inasmuch as he made it clear that the result obtained justified the means employed, for, as a matter of fact, the batsman referred to proved the highest scorer in the match for either side.

In examining the many records of slow scoring to be found in the ample pages of *Scores and Biographies*, one cannot but feel that the advice of the players mentioned, as all were good exponents of the game, must have contributed in no small measure to the tedious batting displays so frequently seen in early Victorian days. Mr. Arthur Haygarth, one of the chief offenders in this respect, when asked what his average was, would reply, "One hour," which was the time he generally stayed at the wicket. In a match in 1844 he took three hours to score sixteen, and three years later made twenty-nine singles in an innings of thirty-

six. An even more pronounced stonewaller was Captain P. H. Mundy, who once batted at Lord's four hours for six runs. And here it may be recalled that in *The Walkers of Southgate* there is the following delightful story *à propos* of slow scoring: An umpire being required at the Oval, a message was sent to Lord's asking that one should be sent. After a time old "Jemmie" Dean waddled on to the ground. He was, of course, asked at once, "How's the match at Lord's going on?" to which he replied very gravely: "Oh, capitally! Lord C—— (who was a sticker) and Mr. —— 'as been in for 'arf an hour; they gets no runs, but just as I left the ground his lordship kicked a beautiful leg bye!" In those days Lord's was anything but a billiard table, except, as John Lillywhite once remarked, as regards the "pockets." Mr. Alfred Lubbock has recorded that it was not an uncommon occurrence to see out of an over of four balls three shoot and the other bump right over the batsman's head. "Neville Lyttelton told me he has twice seen all four balls of an over shoot. I can't call to mind actually witnessing this; but playing in Gentlemen *v.* Players at Lord's some few years after I left [Eton], I received three dead shooters and one next door to it in one over from Wootton. . . . The ground being so fast and fiery, the ball either was past you before you knew where you were, or else bumped over your head." Both Pilch and Mr. C. G. Taylor were dismissed "hat knocked on wicket" in Gentlemen *v.* Players matches, the former in 1837, the latter six years later. Lord's certainly was rough in the old days, and Felix when appearing there would pad even his elbow. Perhaps Canterbury had the smoothest wicket in the country, but the very great majority of grounds partook more or less of the Grampian Hills. It is a fact that

when Pilch travelled round the country with the A.E.E. he took a scythe in his bag so that he might attend to the grass (if any) between the wickets before play commenced.

But, in addition to the causes already enumerated, there was another which had much to do with the sedate run-getting of other days—namely, the straightness of the bowling; and in this connection the names of Grundy, Willsher and Wootton, to mention only three, at once occur to mind. Lord Harris has narrated how the last-named, when steadily plugging away good-pitched balls on the off stump in a match in the sixties at Canterbury, which Mr. C. I. Thornton and Pooley as steadily kept driving to the boundary, was told by Mr. Mitchell to bowl some crooked ones. "If you please, Mr. Mitchell, sir," said the ever civil George, "I can't"—and doubtless several of the bowlers of that period had the greatest difficulty in bowling off the wicket. Buttress, of Cambridge, whom Calverley mentioned in an ode, had great command over the ball and a deceptive flight, and seemed to know intuitively what the batsman would try to do. At his best—he had many off days—he had no superior among medium-paced bowlers. During comparatively recent years the younger generation were afforded an opportunity of judging the extent to which scoring can be kept down, even on good wickets, by accurate bowling, Alfred Shaw at the age of fifty-two taking forty-one wickets for Sussex for twelve and a half runs each. That fact should make it easier to understand how on rougher wickets and when bats did not drive so well as those of to-day the bowlers of earlier times occasionally kept even enterprising batsmen on the defensive. Perhaps the best feat of this nature was when Clarke and Daniel Day, playing for England

v. Kent at Cranbrook in 1851, sent down thirty-two overs to Pilch and E. G. Wenman without a run being made. Several such performances will be found credited to Willsher, who was fast (left) and accurate, with a twist from the leg. At Canterbury in 1860, when playing for Kent against England, he sent down 164 balls for sixteen runs and eight wickets; for the U.S.E.E. *v.* Mr. John Walker's XV at Southgate in the next year he delivered twenty-seven overs for two runs and a wicket against some of the freest batsmen of the time; and in 1871, in the North *v.* South match at Canterbury, led off the bowling for the latter with sixteen maiden overs. Other bowlers there were who, mainly on account of their speed, could seldom be played with much confidence. Redgate, of Nottingham, for two seasons combined spin with remarkable pace, and at Lord's in 1837 bowled Pilch himself first ball in each innings. Mr. Harvey Fellows a little later was, when at his best, rarely scored from with anything like freedom. Even Pilch, so it was said, played him at Lord's with his head turned away, and Parr admitted that he was the only bowler he could not hit to leg.

For all practical purposes the appearance of Messrs. E. M. and W. G. Grace may be said to mark the end of the old-fashioned, precise style of play and the beginning of the new, which introduced into batting a freedom never known before. When the former came upon the scene it was still the general opinion that the only virtuous way to play a straight ball was to return it to, or past, the bowler, and when "E. M." set himself to pull them old cricketers appeared to be, and perhaps were, scandalized at his unorthodoxy. For some seasons he was regarded as a successful heretic, and praise was accorded him grudgingly, the

maxim that effective play is the only good style still failing to be recognized as it deserved. For some years after Dr. E. M. Grace had come to the front, style was by many still regarded almost as the be-all and end-all of batting. In this connection it may be recalled that Messrs. C. I. Thornton and I. D. Walker once made over fifty runs each against H. H. Stephenson's boys at Uppingham, the former by hard hitting and the latter by correct cricket. On the next day Stephenson presented Mr. Walker with a bat, and Mr. Thornton, upon asking whether he too was not to receive one for his excellent play, was told, "No. Mr. Walker played cricket; you didn't!" The idea largely prevalent among cricketers even in the mid-Victorian era was that hard hitting, *per se*, could not be synonymous with sound cricket; hence, to some extent, the instances of slow scoring so frequently chronicled. This recalls a story concerning Lord Harris and Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell going in first together for the Eton Ramblers. The former, in the first or second over, made what was thought to be rather a wild stroke and missed the ball, whereupon his partner called out from the other wicket, "Steady, George, for the first hour!" His lordship, as presumably all are aware, always enjoyed a deservedly high reputation as a correct player; he was not a law unto himself like Mr. A. W. T. Daniel, of whom Grundy once remarked in admiration: "When I give 'im one 'e don't know what to do with, sir, 'e 'its it to leg for four!" But it is, after all, Dr. W. G. Grace who must be held chiefly responsible for the great development in batting during the last half-century. Until he appeared, a batsman either played forward or played back. It has been well said in *The Jubilee Book of Cricket*: "He turned the old one-stringed instrument into a many-chorded lyre. . . .

'W. G.' discovered batting; he turned its many narrow, straight channels into one great winding river." With the increase—it might almost be said the multiplication—of scoring strokes, and the consequent impossibility of setting the field with the same effect as formerly, run-getting naturally became brighter, and when boundaries were introduced and increased attention was given to the preparation of wickets runs came faster still.

CHAPTER XI

CRICKET AS A HOBBY

Mr. R. A. FitzGerald, in his inimitable *Jerks-in from Short-leg*, stated that the greatest duffer at the game is the most enthusiastic, and added that when he isn't oiling his bat he is reading Lillywhite's *Guide and Advice to Cricketers*. There is not so much exaggeration in this dictum as at first there might seem to be. The largest cricket collectors have been, without exception, of little, if any, note as exponents of the game, and, apart from Arthur Haygarth, "Bob" FitzGerald himself, and, possibly, James Pycroft, the same may be said of the most voluminous writers and many of the chief authorities on the game. On the other hand, but few of the leading cricketers have ever attempted to get together a library; to many, indeed, interest alike in their personal doings and the records of the sides they assisted have made little appeal.

One explanation of this may be that life is too short for one to be in the forefront both of active players and collectors. To be either is delightful; to be both would be "very Heaven" and a twenty-four hour day all too short. Only those who can speak from experience can have any idea of the pleasure to be derived from obtaining a coveted item, such as a curved bat, a volume of Britcher's *Scores*, or a copy of Boxall or Epps, for it is a joy which is intense and lasting, and one which brings solace even when one is dreaming darkly of gout and butcher's bills.

It would be interesting to know what has caused cricket collectors to have such a hobby. Certainly, in

the majority of cases, the taste must date back to boyhood days, and one may be sure that, when shillings were necessarily few, any book obtained through self-denial possessed no small sentimental value. He who writes had his interest in the game's history aroused through reading, whilst quite a small boy, the fifth (1868) edition of Pycroft's *Cricket Field*, which introduced him to the great men of the early and heroic days of cricket, when Small and Harris were still giants in the land, and Beldham and Lambert entertained thousands with their matchless skill. The enthusiasm thus engendered caused reference to be made to the ample pages of *Scores and Biographies*, which, with their wealth of fact and anecdote, were studied closer than Horace or Virgil. Other volumes on the game, which had belonged to his father and grandfather, were afterwards examined, and, being found good, led in the most natural way to the choice of a hobby which has increased in interest with the passing of years. Having, too, the privilege of knowing such men as the Earl of Bessborough ("Fred Ponsonby"), Pycroft, Haygarth and Lord Charles Russell served but to stimulate the ardour with which he entered upon his new-found recreation.

The collection of publications on the game as a hobby has perhaps never been in greater favour than at present. About thirty to thirty-five years ago there was a great demand for cricket books; but gradually interest in the subject waned, the natural result being that prices fell. During the war, however, when many overseas players were in England with their regiments, booksellers again received many inquiries, and since the Armistice, cricket having regained all its popularity, the collection of cricketana has again come in vogue.

It is only natural that an enthusiastic young player should desire to possess some books on his favourite

game, but between that and becoming a keen collector is a vast difference. It is safe to say that not one present-day cricketer in a thousand has any idea of the number of books and pamphlets issued on the game, for they have been published not by the hundred but by the thousand. The late Mr. Alfred D. Taylor, in his *Catalogue of Cricket Literature*—a work of which it would be difficult to speak too highly—gave one some idea of the multitude, but the compilation, comprehensive though it was, was not quite complete, for, although proof-sheets of the work were submitted to the chief collectors, a few items, then unknown, have since come to light. The chief aim of these remarks is to warn the young cricketer that, should he decide to enter the ranks of collectors, he should be prepared to expend no small sum in pursuit of the hobby, for he will find, sooner rather than later, that he has embarked on an almost shoreless sea.

To obtain many of the rarer publications it is often necessary to pay fancy prices; if this is not done, one may have to wait an unconscionable time before another opportunity presents itself. In the words of Micawber, "It may be for years or it may be for ever." On the other hand, it is at times possible to obtain, even at auction, some coveted items for a small sum. Thus, during the war I was able to procure a cricket pamphlet, probably unique and over two hundred years old, at what was almost a nominal charge, many who were present probably overlooking it as it was bound with other things and was sold with a volume dealing with the subject of—drunkenness!

However enthusiastic a collector may be, and however wide his net may be spread, it is safe to say he will never succeed in obtaining a copy of every publication ever issued on the game. In other words, however

long he may continue his hobby, he will always have a chance of securing some fresh item to send him on his way rejoicing. One never knows what a day's experience may bring forth. That there will be disappointments of course goes without saying. Thus, a few years ago, seeing a copy of a coloured cricket engraving in the window of a picture dealer in one of the leading London thoroughfares, I inquired the price, and was told "Three hundred guineas." For a moment I wondered whether the sum mentioned was the cost of the picture, the rent of the premises, Excess Profits Tax, or some other matter in which I took no interest, but, upon realizing that the answer really applied to the question asked, ventured to suggest that the amount was somewhat heavy. "Well, you see, sir," was the explanation, "I have heavy expenses, for rent, rates and taxes run into four figures." As I already possessed a copy of the engraving my disappointment was not particularly great, but the experience proved a fact which the young collector might do well to recollect—that prices often rule lower in unimportant streets than in the chief thoroughfares.

It often happens that, when off the beaten track, one comes across something well worth having. It was in such circumstances that I obtained a copy of Captain Crawley's book on the game for the smallest price I have ever been asked—a farthing. (When I insisted on paying sixpence for it, it was due solely to the mercy of Providence that I escaped being hugged by the lady—she was well stricken in years—to whom the small shop belonged.) On another occasion, when in a similar by-way, I saw through a dingy window what could just be recognized as a picture of a cricketer. An inquiry in the shop whether they had any cricket items for sale produced the reply: "Only a man in

cricketing dress—a representation of cricket generally." It was not my affair to enlighten the salesman, so I paid the shilling or eighteenpence demanded and so procured a painting of Alfred Mynn. The sequel was interesting, for, narrating the particulars of the find to Mr. Russell Walker, I was at once told that the portrait used to adorn the walls of the pavilion at Southgate, from which it had disappeared many years before, no one knew how. Upon offering to restore the picture to its rightful owner, "R. D." replied: "I would much rather you had it, for I know you would value it; so please keep it." Again, a few years ago, whilst on pilgrimage through South-West Surrey and Hampshire, in quest of picture postcards for illustrating the first volume of *Scores and Biographies*, I was fortunate enough to obtain in Winchester a charming memento of the game, composed of a set of three stumps (about two inches in length), a ball and two bails, all of ivory, joined together with gold links.

On another occasion, whilst passing through a part of London to which I was a complete stranger, I came across an old book-shop, which I entered. "Have you anything about cricket just now?" I inquired. "No," the owner replied; and added: "But I have some interesting old Bibles if you would care to inspect them."

The old man seemed anxious I should examine his treasures, so I said I should be glad to avail myself of his kind offer. He certainly had a splendid collection, and, as he was turning over the pages of an old folio volume, I suddenly exclaimed: "There! I am sure I saw the score of a cricket match!" A pair of eyes full of astonishment was turned upon me, and I was told, "Not in the Old Testament, sir." At my request the old fellow went carefully through the pages

he had turned over until at last he came across a single sheet, measuring about eight and a half inches by ten, upon which was printed the full score of the match Nottingham *v.* Sheffield and Leicester, wherein Tom Marsden, of immortal memory, made 227 not out off the bowling of William Clarke and Tom Barker. The poem on the match was given below the score, and the sheet had evidently been issued as a separate publication.

I was fortunate in being able to secure the item for the modest price of sixpence. Are many other copies in existence? I have never heard of one. Such things seldom survive long, except by accident or in collections.

Among the chief collectors—half a dozen or so—there is a freemasonry which enables them to become aware of publications issued in various parts of the world, as well as in this country. Having regular correspondents in the Colonies, America and elsewhere, they are enabled to keep pace with affairs by obtaining information which might otherwise be unprocurable. How many followers of cricket, for instance, are aware that books on the game have been issued in Bengali, French, Dutch, German, Danish, Flemish, Gujerati and other languages? Many such things are heard of only by chance, at times some years after publication, for it is quite the exception for books and pamphlets of the nature mentioned to be sent to English periodicals for review. The standard works on the game can generally be obtained without much difficulty, but copies of private-circulation books, of which maybe only twenty or thirty of each have been issued, are seldom procurable save through the generosity of the author.

No good purpose would be served by giving here a list of the chief publications on the game, those books without which, to use the well-crusted compliment,

"no gentleman's library can be considered complete." Such works will be, or should be, well known to all who have even only a nodding acquaintance with the subject. What must astonish many as their knowledge of the matter increases is the prodigious number of pamphlets, guides, handbooks, etc., which have only ephemeral interest, if, indeed, that. Some will be tempted to ask, "Why, then, collect such things?" To do so may be to follow the example of the jackdaw, who can find no possible use for the miscellaneous items it rejoices his heart to get together, but the sense of possession has a charm all its own, and if one rides a hobby with keenness one is apt to aim at finality, and is right in so doing.

To the real enthusiast who has a taste for collecting, the practice of obtaining a copy of the final score-card of a match wherein some remarkable performance has been accomplished is one from which considerable pleasure can be derived.

The cards issued on the various grounds are of all shapes and sizes. One of the largest was, appropriately, that showing the record partnership of Brown and Tunnicliffe at Chesterfield in 1898. Strange to say, the stand was there given as 553 instead of 554, but the matter was rectified subsequently, when a few copies were struck off on satin for private distribution. At the Oval in 1880, during the match between England and Australia—in which "W. G." made 152, Murdoch 153 (not out), and G. F. Grace made his memorable catch off Bonnor—the supply of cards gave out, and the curious spectacle was witnessed of spectators handing in envelopes and odd scraps of paper to the printer for use in the emergency.

In the old days score-cards were comparatively crude productions, and often so many errors appeared on

them as to tempt one to think that the printer had endeavoured to add up the runs and reduce the answer to pounds, shillings and pence. Windsor, of Gravesend, used to travel round Kent about eighty years ago producing cards on his portable machine. But spelling was not his strong point, and his figures had a curious knack of falling into wrong positions. Still, he rose to the occasion nobly when Mynn played his great single-wicket match with Dearman at Town Malling in 1838, so much may be forgiven him.

In the early days of Australian cricket as much as sixpence was charged for a card. Nowadays, owing to the wonderful score-boards erected on the chief grounds, they are not issued and are, in fact, unnecessary. In some measure it is a fact to be regretted, for an official card of a great match is a unique memento. For years even Bermuda has been able to boast of score-cards, and some have also been printed on board ship in the middle of the Indian Ocean recording practice games played by teams *en route* to Australia.

To the joy of many cricketers, what may be called the placard season has commenced. Whenever I am in London during the summer months I find the greatest interest in speculating on the progress of the different games from the information displayed on the contents bills of the various evening newspapers. It is a fascinating occupation, and one by no means without an occasional touch of humour. Whilst ruralizing far from the game a few years ago and wondering how the Australians were faring at Leicester, I entered a small township, and to my delight saw a news bill exhibited with "Armstrong's Duck" on it. Merely that and nothing more. Two or three old ladies were regarding it with puzzled looks, and one invested a penny to see what it was all about. Perhaps she was

a member of the R.S.P.C.A.—she looked a very kind old soul; in any case, I trust she was not disappointed, but I have my doubts.

Some time before the war, when I was collecting furiously, buying anything and everything I could on the game, I arranged with my newsagent to supply me with all the placards he received devoted to cricket. Most of these I still possess, and several of them—especially those referring to the triumphs of "W. G."—are of considerable interest. The last contents bill I secured was in 1915. I saw it outside a stationer's shop in a small country village, and immediately asked for a copy of the paper. Not one was left, and so—much to the undisguised amazement of the shopkeeper, who probably thought she had a lunatic to deal with—I said I would buy the placard. I still have it. All it contains are the words "Death of 'W. G.'" We were then engaged in the greatest war in the world's history, and it was a wonderful tribute to the Old Man's memory that, at such a time, his passing should have been noted so prominently.

My very good friends, the second-hand booksellers, knowing the interest I take in everything respecting cricket, are in the habit of deluging me with their catalogues, a fact for which I am duly grateful. But a protest must be made. One often discovers cricket items mentioned under such headings as "Sport," "Kent," "Surrey," etc., but never until recently had I observed them classified under "Croquet and Cricket." Is this to be taken as an indication that our beloved game has fallen on evil days, or is it merely the indiscretion of a bookseller?

I am inclined to believe the latter explanation the true one, for it is of comfort to my peace of mind to find that the person guilty of the blunder—it was

nothing less—is one of the least known of his calling, and hailed from a small country town. Had the item included under the obnoxious heading been one I was anxious to secure, I should, in the circumstances, certainly have hesitated to give the order, though doubtless my unwillingness would have disappeared before the time of the next postal collection. But it would always have been with mixed feelings that I should have looked at that particular book on my shelves; it would have been regarded in the light of an interloper, unworthy to stand side by side with items which had been catalogued correctly and obtained without any stigma attaching to them. But it was for the slight put upon the game that my indignation was so real and righteous. "Croquet and Cricket" forsooth! As well might one class Royalty with rabbits, or cats with cherubim.

Many people might consider a second-hand catalogue to be the last place in the world in which to discover humour, but even there an entry is occasionally to be found to excite mirth. At least one bookseller I know inserts the comment, "A pleasant companion in a shooting-box in the Highlands," at least half a dozen times in each of his lists. This may make a successful appeal in some cases, but surely it was by mistake that the line was used respecting a *Club Cricket Secretaries' Directory*, which was offered for sixpence. For myself I can only say that if I chanced to find myself in a shooting-box with such a volume as my sole companion —and it requires a big effort to imagine such a thing, for I can put my hand on my heart and declare solemnly that I have never killed anything bigger than a beetle, and that only in self-defence—in such circumstances, I say, I should either commit suicide or lose my reason and be driven to collecting butterflies and bugs.

One of the most amusing offers I ever saw in print

was the following, which appeared in a price list issued by a famous old cricketer who had gone into business as an athletic outfitter:

Cricket, by W. G. Grace, with author's autograph 4s.
Cricket, by W. G. Grace, with author's autograph, *and my own* .. .. 15s.

Wild horses would not drag from me the name of the old player referred to, but those who knew him personally will not be surprised at the value he thus attached to his own importance. But our dear old Champion, whose autograph I once heard of being "swapped" for those of four Bishops! It really seemed, as one read the curious entry, that the world had turned upside-down or was on its very last legs.

It is a curious fact that when anyone, even a stranger, calls to see me, he (or she) begins almost intuitively to talk about cricket. It must be, I think, because several pictures on the game hang in the hall, and that under one of them—the late Walter Mynn's copy of Felix's lithograph of the Eleven of England—is displayed an eighteenth-century bat of the curved variety. The latter has mystified many people, and once a lady seriously inquired if it were an early Chinese wooden razor! Having received an explanation and been told of its age, she asked: "And how much longer is it likely to last?" "Probably my life-time," I replied. "Dear me!" she then said; "is that all?" and she asked the question in such a serious tone that immediately upon her departure I rushed to the nearest mirror to survey my appearance.

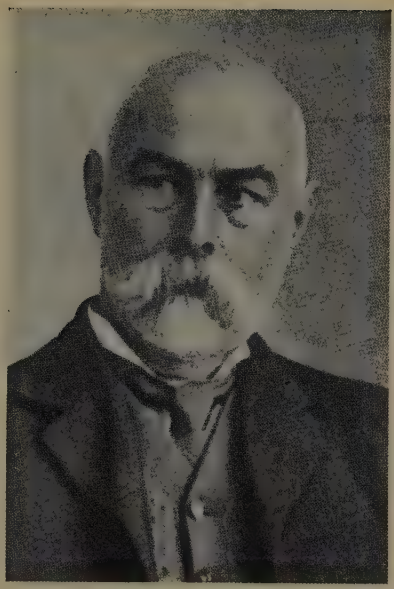
Many ladies who know absolutely nothing about cricket will, most good-naturedly, endeavour to take the greatest interest in my belongings. On one of the walls of my study is a Hampstead Cricket Club *mènu*

card, showing Spofforth, with large black wings, in the act of bowling. That particular picture recently had an irresistible charm for a dear old lady nearer ninety than eighty years of age, to whom it was necessary to explain that the Australian was so portrayed because he was the "Demon" bowler. Old age plays many tricks, and it was hardly surprising to find the good soul inquiring a few minutes later, "Why did you say he was called the devil?"

Some years ago, when chatting to a keen follower of the game, who stated he considered that too few books on cricket were published, I suggested, more in joke than seriously, that he should enlarge his collecting net so as to include books written by cricketers whatever their subject.

The circumstance escaped my recollection until a few years ago, when, meeting the same enthusiast again, I was amused but astonished to learn that he had acted on what he was pleased to call my advice. And when he began to give details of the publications he had succeeded in getting together I realized that no small responsibility attached to me. It was, therefore, with no small relief that I was assured that the new hobby had proved most interesting, though from what I could gather it was likely to develop into an obsession. The collection he had got together was one of infinite variety, ranging from Government blue books to religious tracts, and on subjects so diverse as the Corn Law Acts, banking, and hymns translated from the German. Volumes of poems (including one by C. T. Studd) are there by the hundred, as are novels, among the authors of the latter being G. L. Jessop. There are, too, enough books of travel to stock a small reference library, but the religious tracts outnumber all other kinds of production.

MR. A. L. FORD



MR. CHARLES PRATT GREEN

THE REV. R. S. HOLMES

MR. ALFRED D. TAYLOR

FOUR GREAT COLLECTORS

Probably not one man in a thousand would derive the slightest pleasure from making such a collection, but Nature has formed strange fellows in her time, and (if he will allow me to say so) the person referred to is one of them. Still, many people, I believe, collect insects and moths, a proceeding which seems far less intelligible. It is, however, I must admit, possible to glean many interesting facts respecting cricketers from browsing among the many books and pamphlets referred to. How many followers of the game, for instance, know that Nicholls, the old Somerset professional, wrote a play that was produced in London, or that the famous William Ward, whose 278 in 1820 ranked so long as the record for Lord's, was the author of *Remarks on the Monetary Legislation of Great Britain*? The volumes, too, throw much light on the tastes and occupations of many well-known players, facts of which one might otherwise be ignorant.

It would be interesting to know to how many people it would appeal to make a pilgrimage to the last resting-places of the early great exponents of the game. The number would necessarily not be large, inasmuch as comparatively few devote more than passing attention to the history of cricket. Yet when one has visited the churchyards in which Beldham, Sueter, Lord, John Small, Saunders, Tom Walker, William Ward and Lord Frederick Beauclerk are resting, the writings of Nyren, Pycroft and Haygarth seem more interesting than ever before, and one appears, if only to a slight extent, to have come into personal touch with those named. Unfortunately, no tombstone was erected to Beldham's memory, and the house—Oak Cottage, Tilford—in which, in the evening of his days, he was visited by Mr. Mitford, was pulled down over fifty years ago. The inscription on Sueter's gravestone is

almost illegible, and probably that on Lord's—a large, flat, horizontal stone, upon which children are accustomed to slide in winter months—will become completely so shortly. Saunders's memory is still cherished at Haslemere, though almost a hundred years have passed since he died at the early age of twenty-nine: his grave is within a yard of the east wall of the church, and close to it are others to the memory of various members of his family.

Old Tom Walker, who was as difficult to get from his wicket as Bentley from a Greek poet, and who was wont to stamp and grunt whilst batting and to make the Rev. Lord F. Beauclerk swear at his defensive methods—old Tom is resting just outside the north wall of the old-world church of Chiddingfold, one of the prettiest of Surrey villages. The inscription on his stone can still be traced without difficulty. He died in 1831, aged sixty-eight, and, in *Scores and Biographies*, Mr. Haygarth tells us that "His widow was still alive and hearty at the same place in 1859, aged eighty-four." Her name was Sarah, and doubtless a hundred years or so ago the villagers used to enter her shop (for Tom followed the occupation of a grocer) to gossip with Tom and Sally. However that may be, the fact remains that the vigorous old dame died on September 11, 1860, in her eighty-sixth year, and, as she reached such a green old age, one is glad to believe that Tom was a good husband to her in the time he could spare away from his wicket. The last time I was at Chiddingfold I searched for "the oldest inhabitant," hoping he would be able to recall something of Tom at first hand. I saw him at last, hobbling across the green, and quickly outflanked him. But disappointment was in store. In response to a question asked several times, and at last in such loud tones that

half the village knew my requirements, he replied very quietly, "I'm very sorry, but I can't hear." An attempt to facilitate matters by writing met with no more success, "For," said the old fellow, "I beg your pardon, but I can't see and I can't read." Further endeavours were obviously doomed to disappointment, so the subject was dropped—rather suddenly.

The idea of such pilgrimages will probably commend itself only to the most enthusiastic, for, after all, there is not much pleasure to be derived from the contemplation of tombstones. Mr. Haygarth, when activity had deserted him, wrote to Thoms suggesting he should visit all the churchyards in the South of England in search of inscriptions to the memory of dead cricketers, and offering to pay all his expenses and give him thirty shillings a week. "But," said the famous old umpire to me, "tombstones never appealed very strongly to me, so I begged to be allowed to excuse myself."

I have heard of one enthusiast who, to lessen the tedium of winter, stores his sporting papers carefully in a cupboard from May to September, and, when all cricket in England is over, goes through one again each morning at breakfast. To one not gifted with a good memory the idea may commend itself, although occasionally, when an unusually exciting finish seems in prospect, the temptation to poach on the next day's allowance to discover how the match resulted may be irresistible.

But, after all, it is collecting which becomes one's chief aim once cricket has been adopted as an all-the-year-round hobby. Before anyone decides to become a collector he should fix definitely the limits he intends to set himself. "Cricket literature" is, in itself, a very elastic term. Does it include, for instance, official score-cards, annual reports in pamphlet form, newspaper

and magazine articles, or contemporary reports of matches covering a period extending over more than two hundred years? That is a question which each enthusiast must answer for himself. Should he resolve to collect thoroughly, including prints and engravings, and to take a deep and intelligent interest in the history of the game—the latter would involve copying scores of important matches in various parts of the world from old newspapers—he would find all his time, the whole year round, not more than sufficient. Probably few would be inclined, even if circumstances permitted, to devote their whole life to such a subject; but the hobby is one of extraordinary fascination and remarkable ramifications. Then, too, should one have the inclination to write occasionally on the game, still further demands would be made on one's time. From what has been said it will readily be realized that the choice of cricket as a hobby may very easily prove most exacting, although it is one the pleasures of which seem ever to increase.

The majority of enthusiasts who form a cricket library are content to restrict their energies to securing printed books and pamphlets, for it is quite the exception to find one who has the desire, opportunity and time to collect records, chiefly from old newspapers, of important matches played in the Colonies and foreign countries. It is, in fact, probable that not more than two persons in this country possess a complete record of first-class matches in Australia; and it is, by the way, not a little remarkable that the compilation of "Australian Cricket Scores and Biographies" has never been attempted. Such a work should prove of great value and interest. Could it not be undertaken by the leading Associations in conjunction with the Melbourne Cricket Club? It is satisfactory to know that a history

of the Club mentioned is in course of preparation. Let us hope that its reception will prove hearty enough to lead to the publication of the more comprehensive work.

An important branch of collecting concerns prints, engravings, paintings, etc. A few of the chief eighteenth-century patrons of the game had their portraits engraved, showing them, as often as not, snorting at Corinthian pillars and striking attitudes suggesting that they had saved their country from irretrievable disaster. The most valuable series of representations of cricketers are, of course, those executed about the middle of last century by W. H. Mason, of Brighton, and Corbet Anderson. In more recent times we have had the *Baily's Magazine* engravings and the *Vanity Fair* cartoons, which, although not actual portraits, have been very successful in suggesting some characteristic in their subjects.

It is a matter for regret that no artist continued the series of cricket portraits commenced by the late Mr. Corbet Anderson so many years ago. His coloured lithographs are prized items in many a cricket library. It is only twenty years since Mr. Anderson passed away, full of years and interested as much as ever in the game. The majority of his portraits were drawn at "The Three Tuns," in the Borough, where several of the leading cricketers stayed during their visits to London. Alfred Mynn sat to him there, and Mr. Anderson was fond of recalling that during the sitting of two hours and a half his subject regaled himself with two meals, each of which consisted of two and a half pounds of beef and a quart of beer. The Kentish giant was no believer in canary diet!

Stored in various private houses must be many cricket treasures of unique interest. What, for instance,

became of the tobacco-stopper made from a thumb-joint of the late Mr. C. G. Whittaker, and of the lock of Tom Marsden's hair presented many years ago in a ring to a cricket secretary? What, too, become of the old, neglected tombstones of old cricketers when they fall down? Are they broken up, or (as happened to many of the stones on which Mr. Corbet Anderson's portraits were drawn) used to pave passages in public thoroughfares? I know of one quiet private garden, far in the country and within sight of the local cricket club on the gorse and heather covered common, where any discarded *in memoriam* stones to cricketers would be set up and carefully preserved. But if I continue in this strain I may run the risk of being charged with sacrilege and of meeting the fate of the page

> . . . who got no quarter, but
> Was found the next day with his heels in the air
> And his head in the water-butt.

Printed books and pictures must always form the nucleus of a collection, but, as already suggested, there are many other kinds of mementoes which an enthusiast can get together. Apart from those mentioned, there are cricket designs in china and metal, bats with which historic innings have been played, and balls with which noteworthy feats have been performed. There is, too, a great fascination in keeping a scrap-book, but before commencing to do so one should decide upon its scope, such as whether only English or all kinds of cricket should be dealt with; if first-class games only, or some of minor importance as well, should be admitted; and many other points which would suggest themselves readily as the result of experience. In some cases an attempt has been made to deal with first-class cricket only, and a separate notebook has been set

apart for each county. Such procedure, however, has almost invariably proved disappointing, and experience has proved in no uncertain manner that a far better plan is to devote one large foolscap book to each year's doings, and then compile a full index of the contents.

Active cricketers, however, might prefer to act on more modest lines by keeping a diary. It would be decidedly interesting to know how many players who take part regularly in first-class cricket do so. If the truth could be known, the number would probably be found to be very small, for the average player finds little time to record his reminiscences and impressions, just a brief record of his own doings or a collection of the scores of the games in which he takes part being generally all he attempts to preserve. Yet the few who have essayed to keep a detailed statement of their experiences as well as of the actual play in which they have participated must find the perusal of the records of the greatest pleasure when their days of activity in the field are over. The preservation of such a diary or scrap-book is the means of recalling many a gallant fight in an uphill or closely contested game, and of reviving happy memories of friends with whom one has lost touch. Even a collection of score-cards of the great matches in which one has appeared will yield such results, although the pleasure to be derived is naturally the more pronounced if one's personal observations on the play and the incidents which occurred are added.

It may, of course, be that many cricketers, following the example of Pepys, keep a diary without informing the world of the fact. Let us hope, if only for the sake of future generations, that such will prove to be the case. What may now seem small matters to many

players to chronicle may in years to come prove of much value from the historical point of view. Just imagine how much interest would be created—possibly among the comparatively few, however—if an announcement could suddenly be made to the effect that the recollections of such famous old cricketers as William Beldham, Lord Frederick Beauclerk and Mr. William Ward had been discovered stored in the strong room of a London bank. The flood of light which would thus be thrown on the doings and social history of the M.C.C. during the Club's earliest years would be an event of the greatest conceivable importance.

From the historical point of view of the game, nothing less than a tragedy occurred in the great fire at Burley in August 1908, for then it was that various cricket memoranda left by that Earl of Winchilsea who was the chief founder of the M.C.C. in 1787 were destroyed. It is interesting but unprofitable to speculate what information was contained in those papers. As the Earl was an active player, a generous patron, a personal friend of Thomas Lord (after whom the headquarters of the game are named), and a past President of the Hambledon Cricket Club, it is more than likely that they included records which can never be replaced. In that respect, therefore, the fire of 1908 must be considered as great a disaster as that which caused the destruction of Lord's pavilion and so much of its contents in 1825.

Among famous cricketers who kept a diary were W. G. and E. M. Grace, William Clarke, George Parr, George Anderson and Walter Humphreys, but not one of them did so throughout his career. Clarke's record, which would probably prove to be the most interesting of those mentioned, has disappeared—no one knows where. Harry Trott, who captained the Australian

team of 1896, kept notes during his travels and subsequently penned his reminiscences, which have never been published but are preserved as an heirloom.

Every young cricketer will find it a delightful hobby to keep a scrap-book on the game, but what shall, and what shall not, be admitted to its pages must be as individual taste suggests. Certainly a score-card of every important match played in should be included, and if one desires to aim at finality or completeness one would be obliged to add membership cards, club colours, ball and dinner tickets, *menu* cards, club and match reports, letters of importance (such as the bestowal of one's Blue), etc. In arranging such items in a bound volume, however, care should be taken not to cause the covers to bulge unduly. It is far better to distribute what one wishes to preserve between two or three books than to pack them all into one volume, which may thereby easily become an eyesore and not readily be handled for purposes of reference.

A suggestion has already been made that the contents of scrap-books should be indexed, a fact which serves to induce one to add a few remarks respecting the cataloguing of one's library. Some collectors, strange to say, have never troubled to compile a catalogue of their books and pamphlets, evidently preferring to trust to memory. Whatever the cause, however, it can be stated without fear of contradiction that this omission on their part has deprived them of a very great pleasure. It may surprise some who read this to know that it is possible to adopt many methods in compiling an index; in fact no two that the writer has seen have been drawn up on precisely the same plan. Probably the most thorough was that adopted by the late Mr. Alfred D. Taylor in his *Catalogue of Cricket Literature*, wherein he gave titles and names of authors, all

in one list, in strict alphabetical order. When dealing with his own library he made use of the card-index system—a method which has much to recommend it inasmuch as it is always possible to make additions readily in their correct positions. The only drawback seems to be—and in some cases it would be a serious one—that such a plan makes no small demand on space. The Rev. R. S. Holmes's catalogue is contained in one quarto volume, a number of pages being allotted to each letter of the alphabet, and each new addition being made as the last entry under the initial letter concerned. This makes a good working catalogue for purposes of reference, notwithstanding that the entries are not in strict alphabetical order. The late Mr. A. L. Ford, who was very thorough in everything he undertook, seems to have catalogued his possessions under every possible heading: thus, a volume entitled "A Book about Cricket" would be found indexed under A, B and C. To most people such completeness will seem unnecessary, and therefore it is not likely to commend itself to collectors at all readily. My own method, one which has proved entirely satisfactory, has been to index titles and copy them into a quarto loose-leaf book ruled in small squares, leaving a couple of blank lines between each entry for additions. By this means the record can always be brought to date without the least trouble, and, if necessary, fresh pages be inserted at any place desired. Such a book, with enough leaves to fill it, can be purchased for about five shillings—quite a small outlay.

Another binding which has proved most useful is known as a spring-back portfolio. Such things can be obtained readily in sizes varying from octavo to music, while smaller can be made to order at about fifteen shillings a dozen. These smaller ones are very

convenient for binding the small local guides and handbooks, of which there has been such a flood. Thus, instead of having perhaps two or three hundred such publications in a row, one is enabled to pack them neatly in a few dozen cases. The latter can then be labelled and placed in alphabetical order on the shelves, ease of access to any item thus being ensured instead of a long and perhaps unsuccessful hunt being involved. The larger cases will be found convenient for a variety of purposes, such as preserving catalogues, paper-covered pamphlets, annual reports, magazine articles, *Vanity Fair* cartoons, etc.

CHAPTER XII

BOOKS AND WRITERS

So many hundreds of books and pamphlets on cricket have been published that there must be at least some which appeal strongly to each lover of the game, for all phases of the pastime have been dealt with. There have been books of verse and scores, instructions how to play the game, volumes of reminiscence and biography, as well as histories of club, county and international cricket. Yet, all this notwithstanding, one is inclined to repeat the opinion expressed by a writer in the *Quarterly Review* of October 1884, that "the *magnum opus* of cricket has yet to be written." Bearing in mind the pleasure afforded by such writers as Nyren, Pycroft, Andrew Lang, E. B. V. Christian, Sydney Pardon, E. V. Lucas and H. S. Altham—to mention only a few, though perhaps the chief, names—this may seem ungenerous; the fact is, however, cricket is so great a game that it is almost impossible for an ordinary mortal to do full justice to its many merits.

For a long period the game's literature—using the word in its widest sense—was the production of wholehearted enthusiasts, men whose efforts were the outcome of their love for cricket and who were, presumably, content if their ventures resulted in no financial loss. It was not until much later that those who adopted writing about cricket as a means of livelihood came on the scene, the first of them probably being William Denison (1801–56), now best recalled by his *Sketches of the Players* and his *Cricketer's Companion*; but even he made the subject one more for his leisure moments

than for his chief activities. He joined the Press in 1820 and was the first journalist to place cricket statistics regularly before the public—

> He was the first that ever burst
> Into that silent sea.

Himself a player of but little note, although he was known as "Stick-em-up Denison" and once had the great satisfaction of bowling down the wicket of the famous Felix, he took part in a very large number of games of minor importance and often included his doings in them in tables devoted to the performances of the leading players in matches of note. He had a weakness for advising the Committee of the M.C.C. on any matter which occurred, or was suggested, to him; and as the first Honorary Secretary to the Surrey County Cricket Club he was far indeed from being a success, although he always prided himself on his business acumen and power of organization. He claimed to have played for Surrey against Middlesex at Richmond at the early age of twelve, and in a postscript to the long dedication of his *Sketches of the Players* he wrote: "In answer to a remark which I overheard at Lord's last summer, 'that Mr. Denison could not know much about the game because he obtained so few runs,' I beg to suggest that the dislocation of an elbow, met with at cricket, and an impaired vision arising not merely from surgical operations, for I have had eleven on one eye, but an average of bed of not quite *four* hours per night, for twenty-six years, are somewhat calculated to spoil a man's sight for hitting. Some years back, and for many years, there were few gentlemen whose batting or bowling average stood better." W. Denison may have been—in fact, he undoubtedly was—a character *pour rire*, rushing from Lord's to the

Oval and back again in a wig, a tall wide-brimmed white hat and long-frocked coat, but he can be regarded as the father of cricket journalism. His portrait may be seen in The England Eleven lithograph and the Sussex *v.* Kent engraving.

The great majority of the earliest pamphlets were in verse, and were the efforts of young men who wrote about the game merely as a relaxation from more serious affairs. William Goldwin, a schoolmaster, issued his *Musæ Juveniles* at the age of twenty-four, and it is likely that the "In Certamen Pilæ" contained therein was written when he was even younger; James Love, whose real name was Dance, was a comedian, and his well-known *Cricket: an Heroic Poem* was composed, printed and published in the course of a month when he was only twenty-two; while John Burnby, an attorney-at-law, produced *The Kentish Cricketers* at the age of twenty-six, in reply to *Surry Triumphant* by his friend the Rev. John Duncombe. All these effusions, though unlikely to make much appeal to the average follower of the game, are valued alike by the collector and the historian; and that they were appreciated the century before last is apparent from the fact that Love's poem ran through three editions during the author's lifetime and that Burnby's was reprinted in octavo form a year after its first appearance in quarto. Goldwin, whose verses would deservedly have gained more immediate recognition had they been in English instead of in Latin, was certainly the most accomplished poet of those named, and one wishes that he had contributed more to the literature of the game.

Apart from the volumes of scores compiled by Britcher, Epps and Bentley, and the handbooks of Boxall and Lambert, no further publication of much note was issued until 1833. Then, however, John

Nyren's *Young Cricketer's Tutor* appeared and met with a most hearty reception. It would be impossible to say anything new respecting this classic, for the charm of the book itself and the rich humanity of its author at once captured all hearts, and ever since it has remained a favourite with all who love the great game. The slender volume resulted from many conversations between Nyren and Charles Cowden Clarke, and one regrets that the latter's influence in the production was not repeated so far as William Fennex and the Rev. John Mitford were concerned, for the two last-named were also wont to discuss at length the glories of bygone cricket and cricketers. Mitford, however, has caused his name to be gratefully remembered by contributing two papers, in the form of a review of Nyren's work, to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, of which he was editor. Few more delightful articles on the game have ever been penned, and it is a pity that such a scholarly writer did not make cricket more often the subject of his remarks. A detailed account of his talks with Fennex, a man of mirthful eccentricities, would have made a most entertaining book.

If Nyren may be regarded as the first man ever to produce a cricket book which will always remain pre-eminently readable, it must be added that he did not gain that distinction many years before Pycroft. The Hambledonian was, of course, much the older man—he was born in 1764, and his literary success came to him late in life; but Pycroft began to write whilst still quite young—his *Principles of Scientific Batting* was issued, at the age of twenty-two, in 1835—and the first edition of his *Cricket Field* came out in 1851, "after sixteen years of research and observation." That famous book, which, like Nyren's, ran through many editions, has gained rather than lost in popularity with

the passing of time. It was based on a manuscript presented by Mitford in 1836, and in the following year, during which John Nyren died, Pycroft made a tour for information among the cottages of William Beldham and the few surviving worthies of his generation. For the facts he gathered at first hand one should always be grateful, and especially so for the scraps of conversation he has recorded with Beldham.

To the original research of Pycroft, Haygarth and Box, and especially of the two first-named, all subsequent writers on the history of cricket have owed much, if they have not always acknowledged the fact. The three men were contemporaries, and each lived to a ripe age—Box to eighty-four, Pycroft to eighty-two and Haygarth to seventy-seven; so evidently the study of the game's history is conducive to longevity. Haygarth, but for poor health, would probably have gone in for agriculture; instead, he consoled himself by compiling *Scores and Biographies*, a work to which he devoted the labour of over sixty years. At the age of fourteen he bought a copy of *Bentley*, and two years later began to collect scores on his own account. It proved to be a lifetime hobby, and not long before his death he said to the writer: "I can truly affirm that if, when I began the collection, I had known the trouble and expense I should be put to for so many years, I should never have undertaken the work. I am wise too late." Still, habit having become second nature, he continued to follow events in the cricket world with the closest interest to the very day of his death, his last act being to arrange for a note, which he himself had written, to be sent to the editor of *Cricket* announcing "All is over.—A. H." For many years he was an invalid, and it was a most keen regret to him that ill-health prevented him from revisiting

THE REV. JAMES PYCROFT

MR. ARTHUR HAYGARTH

MR. H. T. WAGHORN

MR. H. S. ALTHAM

SOME CRICKET HISTORIANS

Hambledon, to which place he had made more than one pilgrimage in his youth and early manhood. One of the most good-natured and gentle, as well as the most retiring, of men, he has, more than any other writer, gained cricket immortality.

Neither Pycroft nor Box was destined to make the chief work of his life that which he originally intended, for the former studied Law at Lincoln's Inn and took Holy Orders ere adopting literature as a profession, while Box, before becoming identified with the Press, for some years kept a school at Town Malling, where he numbered Mr. W. South Norton, a future Kent captain, among his pupils. Box became cricket editor of *The Times*, and during his latter years held himself somewhat aloof, preferring to sit alone in the grand-stand, apart from his fellow journalists. In his home at Camberwell, however, where he invariably wore the old-fashioned cut-away coat, he was a most hospitable host, one of his favourite expressions being, "I generally have two glasses of port a day, and should be glad if you would join me in one." His best known book is *The English Game of Cricket*, published in 1877.

Mention of the foregoing invites reference to Mr. H. T. Waghorn, whose delving among ancient records has resulted in so much entertaining and valuable information being brought to light. Much that Haygarth overlooked or, possibly, discarded has been preserved by him, and, although now in his eighty-sixth year, he is as keenly interested as ever in the game. His research work did not commence until he was middle-aged, but that it did not start earlier was due to his having adopted the Army as a profession. If any man in England seems almost certain to become a centenarian it must be this friend of long standing, for to-day he would pass well for sixty. So keen has

been his eyesight, and so steady his hand, that at the age of seventy he was able to write the Lord's Prayer in a circle eleven-sixteenths of an inch in diameter.

In the course of a speech at Bristol a few months before the war Mr. Birrell said he declined to make any distinction between literature and journalism: "A journalist writes. Shakespeare cannot do any more. Whether he has written what is called literature means whether he has written something that a week hence will give anyone the slightest pleasure. A description of a cricket match may be as immortal as a poem by Theocritus. An account of a prize-fight may last for ever if you know how to do it. A review of a book may be much better literature than the book itself. You may find literature in the columns of a country newspaper, but I don't advise any young man to spend his life looking for it."

The development of journalism so far as cricket is concerned is a matter not without interest. In the earliest days of the game many great matches were not reported at all, and even when it became customary for details to appear in the newspapers only the briefest facts were chronicled. Unfortunately, it was not considered necessary to give individual scores, and it was the exception rather than the rule to publish the names of the players. Occasionally only the result would be stated with, perhaps, the totals of the innings of each side. Such restriction naturally afforded neither scope nor encouragement to writers, and it was not until the last quarter of the eighteenth century that much improvement in this respect became apparent. By the time Victoria came to the throne many newspapers, including some issued in the provinces, were in the habit of reporting important matches with a wealth of detail which would probably surprise many present-day

followers of the game. The accounts in *Bell's Life*, the greatest of sporting papers, were often wonderfully complete and picturesque, and when that journal discontinued publication there were many heavy hearts, as there were when, in more recent times, the *Sportsman* adopted a similar policy. It was, it will be remembered, Mr. John Walker, of Southgate, who, upon arriving at Lord's one glorious summer day and finding the ground empty, exclaimed: "What! no cricket at Lord's? It's as bad as a Sunday without *Bell's Life*!"

There are few better ways for a student of the game to pass a wet day than by glancing through the columns of old "Bell," and so resuming acquaintance with cricketers of a past generation. There is a flavour about those old volumes with which one does not meet in the newspapers of to-day. Much of the information contained in them would by some people be considered frivolous, but there was also much wit and light-hearted banter. The editor himself must have had a keen sense of humour, judging from the manner in which he used the blue pencil. An instance of the kind of matter occasionally to be found may be cited. Early in 1852, in a match at the Oval, stumps were drawn at seven o'clock on the first day, instead of at seven-thirty as was customary. (Then a man could leave his office in the City at five and be certain of seeing two hours' cricket.) On the following Sunday morning Mr. John Burrup, the Honorary Secretary to the Surrey County Cricket Club, upon opening *Bell's Life*, must have read the following lines with considerable amusement:

'Twas a beautiful light, and deliciously bright,
And the sun sailed high in the heaven;
Flocks of people surrounded the whole of the ground,
Yet the stumps they were pulled up at *seven!*

No wonder that this should make people hiss;
Now listen, friend * * * * * *, to me;
The course you're pursuing will lead to the ruin
Of yourself and your famed county.

Probably few newspapers of to-day would have printed the above had it been sent to them, yet at the time one was not surprised to see it in "Bell," and everyone was amused and nobody offended.

The genial "Bob" FitzGerald initiated a style of reporting which was all his own. He was a true wit and his remarks were always anticipated with considerable pleasure. Neither friend nor foe resented his chaff, for it was always good-natured and to the point. He had many imitators but no serious rival; in fact, the efforts of some others to adopt his methods must at times have caused considerable mystification to the average subscriber to the paper. One can, for instance, easily imagine a person after reading the following, respecting a game played in August 1862, asking, "What *does* it mean?"

Vain were the efforts of a powerful twenty-two against an eleven whose bowlers represented the antiquity, the conservatism, and the aboriginal element of the old country, combined with the peculiar compound of the "hoss" and alligator of which the "Benicia Boy" is the recognized representative.

Another well-known writer with a distinctive style was Mr. W. H. Knight, for some years editor of *Wisden*. He invariably dealt in picturesque fashion with matters, especially when weather and applause were concerned. Thus, referring to the conditions experienced in 1878, he wrote:

Mucky, messy, muddy wickets played Old Scratch with true cricket and upset all calculations and anticipations. In May, nineteen of the thirty-one days were thoroughly wet ones. More-

over, two-thirds of June was as miserable as the May days, for up to the 20th, scarcely a day of the leafy month passed away without copious rainstorms pelting down, drenching the grounds and making the cricket community as miserable as maniacs.

A year before, when dealing with a match wherein Dr. E. M. Grace, going in first, had made 200 not out and Dr. A. Grace 28 not out, he has commented: "A doctor at the beginning, and a doctor at the end. Such is life."

To many of the old-time journalists a deep debt of gratitude is due, for not only did they do their work conscientiously but they performed their tasks under conditions far more exacting than those of to-day. Travelling then was a far more fatiguing affair than it is now, accommodation and arrangements generally for the Press left much to be desired, and, of course, there was no telephone. A photograph survives of four of the chief journalists of 1871, men whose names must be familiar to all students of the game. On the extreme left is C. W. Alcock, an old Harrovian, destined to become a few months later Secretary to the Surrey County Cricket Club, an appointment he held until his death thirty-five years later. His activities were many, and in consequence his bed was often unslept in. Probably there never has been a harder or more conscientious worker in the cricket world, for—and all this in addition to what he did for Association football—he proved himself one of the greatest of county secretaries, he contributed regularly to many newspapers, founded *Cricket* and edited it, and also made himself responsible for other books and pamphlets, including all the twenty-nine issues of Lillywhite's *Annual*. To Box, who is seated next to him, reference has already been made. The third figure is that of George Kelly-King, who, with Charles Pardon, founded the Cricket

Reporting Agency. He, too, did much good work, though perhaps he is now best remembered, especially by those who can speak feelingly on the point, as having been something of an autocrat. It seems curious to recall that he had sufficient influence to prevent smoking in the Press-box. Several of the persons affected were his employees, and they had, of course, to bow to his decision, but why others—such as C. J. Butcher, of the *Field* (though then, I think, of *Bell's Life*) and Martin Cobbett, of the *Sporting Life*—should have put up with his prejudices is hard to understand. However, the majority of those chiefly concerned seemed to make up for lost opportunities after his death, although the embargo mentioned never affected Alcock, who was always a non-smoker. The fourth person who appears in the group is Charles Mather, of Brighton College and Exeter (Oxford). He was for some time cricket editor of *Bell's Life*, and he died young—at forty-two—in 1878.

Practically the whole of the Press work of those named was anonymous, as indeed has almost invariably been that of the majority of professional journalists. At times it has been suggested that all articles and reports on the game should be signed, but experience has proved that the public generally attaches little, if any, importance to the point; so long as the contributions are sound and informative so long will the publications in which they appear receive support. "Je n'ai jamais signé un article de ma vie," once declared M. de Blowitz to a friend. The opinions of famous players are, of course, always interesting, but it was only to be expected that the M.C.C. would recommend that the Selection Committee, when inviting men to play for England, should make it a condition that those chosen should not make a report or statement

of any kind to the Press until the end of the season respecting any Test Match in which they might play.

The scotching of the cricketer-journalist was a good thing. No man can serve two masters. The playing cricketer's state of mind ought to be a complete blank, except as regards what the ball is up to at the moment. The ball ought to be treated as a living imp that wants perpetual watching and to be dealt with by instinct, not calculation. The journalist-cricketer, on the other hand, wants to take stock of everything, and he fetters his instinct to *do* by simultaneously having to impress on his memory the things that he is going to record. I know that if a footpad set about me in the street I should not fancy my chance if, before defending myself, I resolved to make a mental note of all that happened, in order to be able to give a lucid account of the event.

Another point is that some cricketers, when asked to put pen to paper, being quite inexperienced in the matter, do not hesitate to commission a friend or acquaintance to "put the matter through" for them. Thus whole newspaper columns, and even entire books, have borne the names of players who did not themselves write or even inspire a single word. Anything which tends to stop such proceedings is worthy of all support.

Not the least change which has taken place in connection with the game during the last fifty years or so concerns the communication of news. About 1861 many reports in the papers could be found headed "By Magnetic Telegraph," the words obviously being printed to impress on the reader the fact that those responsible for the presentation of what followed used every endeavour to keep as up to date as possible. The first cabled message concerning cricket in Australia came through during the visit of "W. G.'s" team in the early seventies, and even now it is interesting to

glance through the files of the Commonwealth newspapers of that time, and even later, and to note the evident pride with which information was set forth under "By Electric Telegraph" or "By Submarine Telegraph." When Stoddart's Team went out in 1894–5 the *Pall Mall Gazette* was considered most enterprising, and justly so, to arrange for a daily service of news respecting the doings of the men. Now the result of a match in Melbourne or Sydney can be made known in London in a minute or two, a fact which tends to recall the admiration, not unmixed with astonishment, with which Pycroft announced in one of his books that then it was possible for people as far away as Edinburgh to be acquainted with what had happened at Lord's or the Oval as recently as an hour or so before.

Another respect in which there has been a marked development concerns the publication of statistical matter, for, although Denison indulged occasionally in figures almost a century ago and found several imitators, it has been only during the last thirty to forty years that they have become a regular and prominent feature of cricket journalism. Soon after the resumption of the game after the War, I was privileged to have a long conversation with an ex-captain of one of the first-class counties, and during the course of it two remarks that he made impressed me much. They were: "The play's the thing, and statistics, especially averages, go for nothing," and "People often make wrong deductions from statistics, for so few can attach the right importance to them when they cover a long period."

So far as the former statement is concerned, most followers of the game would probably agree with the remark that "The play's the thing," for, after all,

cricket should be only a game. The late Mr. Fred Gale, the "Old Buffer" of happy memory, was fond of declaring that first-class cricket had become a money-making concern as well as a recreation; and there was, of course, considerable truth in the statement, as for very many years finance has naturally had to be considered in the matter. But are there many cricketers who can truthfully declare that they take no interest in the tables of averages to which newspaper readers are treated each week during the summer months?

That there may be a few such individuals I am prepared to admit, but they can probably be numbered on the fingers of one hand. It is most likely true, too, that in many other cases the interest is very slight and merely for the moment. It would surely not be human for the keen player, on opening his paper on a Monday morning, if he did not allow his attention to be directed, even for a few moments, to the batting and bowling summaries. Strictly speaking, individual averages go for nothing, as the accomplishments of the side are by far more important. But it would be Utopian to expect neither spectators nor players themselves not to examine the lists referred to with curiosity.

At various times different people, whose opinions on cricket matters were entitled to the greatest respect, have not hesitated to declare that the publication of the averages week by week has done harm to the game on the ground that the procedure has caused some cricketers to play for their own aggrandisement and not for the good of their side. That there have been a few examples of this cannot be denied; but such selfishness was in evidence long before the figures were given weekly. Years and years ago Pycroft described such persons—surely unworthy of the name of "cricketers"—as "wretches concentrated all in self."

In more recent times Lord Hawke, writing in 1904, spoke of "those beastly weekly averages," and added that their publication deliberately encouraged slow play. I thought at the time, and still think, that the statement was of too sweeping a nature altogether. However that may be, certain it is that if a cricketer is prone to play for his own hand, and not for the good of his side, it is the duty of the County Committee to speak plainly to him, and, if the warning is unheeded, to dispense with his services. "Drastic treatment," some may comment. Perhaps so, but surely not too severe, for if the player concerned were one of the leading men of the day, his example would be pernicious to those of less eminence; on the other hand, if he were a new and young man, such treatment should prove beneficial, as if he possessed the instincts of a true cricketer he would readily recognize his mistake and place his side's welfare before all else. I am, however, glad to believe that the number of such selfish individuals has generally been over-estimated; one always likes to think well of one's fellow men until it has been proved that confidence has been misplaced. In any case, I cannot help feeling that, in all such instances as these, maybe the fault rests with the players themselves and not with the statisticians.

Statistics, if used judicially, have their use, and if a column of them provides interest or food for thought for those who love the game, publication is justified. With those people who profess themselves disgusted with all statistics, whatever their shape or form, I have no patience. An amusing instance of this came to my notice some years ago. At a big meeting in London a very prominent person indeed in the cricket world, in the course of a long speech on the game, spoke (to my great wrath) in most severe terms of statistics and

statisticians; yet two days later I received from him a letter asking if I could supply him with three or four tables, to compile which involved a couple of days' hard labour. His request was complied with, and the statistics were duly forwarded with a few appropriate and, I trust, not too severe remarks.

Statistics, if not overdone, are generally of interest to the keen follower of the game, and often of use; but they are, after all, a poor substitute for the game itself. All the same, I should be very sorry indeed if their publication were restricted to the end of the season, and I, for one, feel much gratitude to those gentlemen of the Press who, doubtless at the expense of Sunday headaches and much laborious work, compile the weekly averages for our benefit.

Whatever opinion one may hold on that point, however, it must be acknowledged that statistics are most useful for purposes of reference. It is, for instance, difficult to imagine *Wisden* appearing without its dozens of well-arranged summaries. When great matches were few, however, it was quite another matter, for then it took but little time to glance through the scores to ascertain what any particular individual had done. In the earliest of all such publications—the fifteen volumes compiled by Samuel Britcher, the M.C.C. scorer, dealing with the years 1790 to 1805 inclusive—no averages ever appeared. Neither were any admitted to the pages of Epps or Bentley. All three of the Lillywhite ventures, however—the *Guide*, *Companion* and *Annual*, which, between them, bridged a period of just over half a century—furnished statistics, although neither ever attempted to give in full the scores of all first-class games. The most valuable of those three publications is the *Guide*, which lasted from 1849 until 1866. A complete set, which is rarely met with, can generally

be relied on to fetch anything from fifteen to twenty guineas. That the work did not have a longer existence was due solely to the conduct of the editor. From time to time matter in questionable taste had appeared in its pages, and in June 1865 the M.C.C. Committee decided to withdraw their patronage, as, in their opinion, Fred Lillywhite had exceeded "the fair limits of criticism upon cricketers." The remarks he had published concerning Goodhew, Parr and Wisden would alone have been sufficient to justify the Club in their action. Lillywhite appealed in vain for the decision to be reversed, and eventually matters between him and the Committee became even more strained as the result, so that less than a year later the latter found it necessary to authorize the Secretary to take legal action against him for wilful damage to their printing press.

A question which is often asked is, "What is the value of a complete set of *Wisden's Cricketers' Almanack*?" It is difficult to say, because, as a thoughtful man once observed, much depends on whether one is a buyer or a seller. For some reason, which to many is quite a mystery, certain volumes have been given quite a fancy value: in fact, many of these I have seen offered for a shilling or even sixpence apiece, whilst they have been priced in printed lists at one, two or three guineas. A short time before the war a dealer offered a complete set for twelve shillings and, naturally, found no difficulty in procuring a purchaser. That, of course, was exceptional, but even at a well-attended auction sale in 1916 I saw another set, in the original covers, knocked down for two and a half guineas. There must have been many present who were interested in cricket literature, for almost immediately afterwards there was some spirited bidding for a copy of *Surry Triumphant: or the Kentish-Men's Defeat*, which brought

in two guineas. It is, however, generally at private sales, where the seller (often a lady) is apt to accept the first offer received, that the greatest bargains, from the purchaser's point of view, are made. In such circumstances dealers have often obtained for a few shillings what they well knew to be worth pounds. It is safe to say that a set of the *Almanack* is worth what it will fetch. Most followers of the game would be glad to possess the entire series, but not all could spare the five and a half feet of shelving accommodation necessary to house them. Many years ago I received by the same post offers from two dealers, the prices asked being £12 and £40. Some time later I called on the man who required the latter sum and reminded him of his offer, as I was anxious to learn how he arrived at the figure. "You must be Mr. Ashley-Cooper," he said. I acknowledged the fact and, upon pressing him for an explanation, was told (whilst he thoughtfully scratched his ear), "Well, you see, sir, I was told that you would buy anything on cricket that was offered you!" This may have been somewhat flattering, but it was not altogether satisfactory. The dealer admitted afterwards that he had sold the set for nine guineas, and he appeared perfectly content when he recalled the transaction. Mr. R. E. Bush told me that he bought Dr. E. M. Grace's set, complete from the commencement, for £32, but this, of course, was one of unusual personal interest, for each volume, bound in green morocco, contained "The Little Doctor's" autograph. Mr. P. F. Warner, too, informed me that he had insured his complete set—given him as a wedding present by Mr. Harry Luff, then the proprietor of the publication—for £50. The latter fact reminds me that a dealer (a great lover of the game) once declared the value to be 50s. if buying,

£50 if selling, and £100 if insuring, but of course he did not intend to be taken quite seriously. It is, however, no easy matter to assess the value of the volumes, when a set is sold at public auction for two and a half guineas during the war and another, privately, in 1926 for £150. Early in 1926, it may be of interest to add, Messrs Wisden themselves estimated the value as being from one hundred to one hundred and fifty guineas.

The opinions of all—of active players and lookers-on alike—will agree that, so far as annual publications are concerned, *Wisden* is the best of all books; but, if the whole range of the game's literature is taken under review, there will not be unanimity, for the simple reason that tastes must necessarily vary when so many different phases of cricket have to be considered. Thus, Love's poem may appeal to one on account of its antiquity, *Nyren* because of its almost indefinable charm, the *Cricket Field* owing to its literary worth and its information about early players, and *The Walkers of Southgate* because of its many interesting reminiscences concerning the seven famous brothers, who were known and loved by so many of us. But a book which appeals most to one is not necessarily the best; neither can the number sold of any publication be a criterion, for, if it could, the palm would have to be awarded—which would be absurd—to various penny or twopenny pamphlets of ephemeral interest only. Each person can, however, to a certain extent decide the matter for himself by answering the question, "If I had to spend a fortnight on a lighthouse, and were allowed to take with me only one book, on which volume would my choice fall?"

Consideration of the matter mentioned would probably lead one to compare the merits of past and present

writers, and on that point it would probably be agreed that, whilst fully admitting the excellence of Nyren, Mitford and Pycroft, the best of the moderns could hold their own. In recent times there have been books on almost every conceivable phase of the game, and the best of them of much merit. Thus, so far as original research is concerned, it would be impossible to speak too highly of Mr. Betham's *Oxford and Cambridge Cricket Scores and Biographies*, or of "H. P.-T.'s" books on the archæology of the game; Mr. Philip Norman's *Annals of the West Kent Cricket Club* and Mr. Alfred D. Taylor's *Catalogue of Cricket Literature* are models of what such books should be; the essays of Messrs. Andrew Lang, E. B. V. Christian and E. V. Lucas must have given delight to thousands, and the same may be said of Mr. Horace G. Hutchinson's *Peter Steele the Cricketer*; while Mr. Altham, by his *A History of Cricket* has not only unconsciously raised a monument to his own memory, but has proved himself most deeply read on the subject he has dealt with in so masterly a manner.

But, although many most interesting books on cricket have been given to the world, several which would have been of the greatest value to historians of the game and have appealed to players generally have never been published. It must always be lamented that the famous William Beldham, who died in 1862 at the age of ninety-six, was not fortunate enough to find his Boswell, for his experience was unique and his reminiscences would have covered a period of three-quarters of a century, including the most romantic epoch in the whole history of the game. In his early days he must have met several of the cricketers who had appeared before Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales; he was one of the most brilliant performers in the

Hambledon Eleven, and he lived long enough to hear of the departure of the first English team for Australia. Beldham had a retentive memory and, despite doctor's orders, was always ready to recall the past and expatiate on the greatness and the foibles of his contemporaries. His full story would doubtless have been as amusing as interesting. How much he could have told us, for instance, of Fennex, who was a smuggler and peddler, and anything to which he could put his hand, as well as a cricketer. Mitford referred to his quaintness and his humour, but Beldham, who had known him in his great days, would have proved even more interesting and far more informative on the subject.

Glancing back, names of other cricketers readily occur whose recollections would have been most welcome. To mention only a few there were Felix of Kent, William Clarke of Nottingham, whose egotism was most engaging, the Hon. Sir Spencer Ponsonby-Fane, F. R. Spofforth, and Tom Horan, whose facile style and good-natured reminiscences in the *Australasian* were appreciated by more than one generation. The last-named, although frequently urged to publish his recollections in book form, never undertook the task, devotion to an invalid sister, it is believed, being the cause. Sir Spencer's abstention was due to his intense dislike of publicity.

This opportunity may be taken of suggesting that a book, on the lines of *The Walkers of Southgate*, might be prepared dealing with the Lyttelton family. Such a history would cover a period of three-quarters of a century, for the father of the famous brotherhood was himself a cricket Blue and three generations have been seen at Lord's. Cannot the Hon. Robert be induced to undertake the task? As an acknowledged authority

on the history of the game, as well as an accomplished writer, he appears to be pre-eminently fitted for the work. Reminiscences of contemporaries could doubtless be obtained most readily, and of course there could be contributions by the surviving brothers.

CHAPTER XIII

SOME MEMORIES OF MINOR CRICKET

EVERYONE who has had much experience of club cricket will know that there is, perhaps, no keener lover of the game than the man who is not worth his place in any side, yet wishes to play, notwithstanding that he never distinguishes himself in any department, even by accident. He will cheerfully field during an innings of five hundred, not bowl a ball, and miss several catches, and then, at the end of the day, either be denied a "knock" by the efflux of time or, going in last, be bowled first ball.

The most extraordinary thing about him is that he would gladly have such an experience on each day of the week, and then, after resting on Sunday, be anxious to go through it all again. A poet, "H. F. A.," once suggested in neat verse what the nature of his reflections must be:

> Some bitters there were—I am forced to admit it—
> For instance, that couple of "ducks" in one match;
> That long-hop which bowled me—I ought to have hit it;
> The groan of the crowd when I "buttered" that catch!
> Then I ran out our captain. He scowls when he meets me,
> And talks of it still in a mortified tone.
> "Who bowled three wides in one over?" still greets me
> E'en now, though the season is over and done.

"Quid," the witty R. A. FitzGerald, has said of the plodder: "He hammers on, like the fabulous horse, on the 'ard, 'ard road to honour and glory. He is the best-tempered fellow in the world, and his name appears weekly in some facetious contribution to the sporting

"CRICKETERS"

From the painting by John Ritchie, 1855

prints, under some new *nom de guerre*. You may catch him any afternoon at practice; and when he isn't oiling his bat, he is reading Lillywhite's *Guide and Advice to Cricketers*. . . . He will always field out when you are a man short, and will, if properly appealed to, for the sake of cricket, go so far as to carry your bag to the railway station; and we hope cricket will never be without many representatives of this little-appreciated but valuable type."

Many such cricketers will be found associated with early-rising clubs, whose members, in the great majority of cases, are prevented by business duties from participating in the game at more orthodox hours. And 'twas ever thus. In 1784 there was established a York Cricket Club whose members agreed "to meet upon Heworth Moor every Tuesday and Friday morning at four o'clock . . . for the purpose of playing at Cricket, to play for one penny a Game, and to fine Threepence if not within sight of the Wickets each Morning before the Minster strikes five o'Clock." There were similar clubs at Sherborne in 1835 and at Dudley a few years later, whilst here is a copy of an old window-bill concerning like associations at Mitcham, in Surrey:

NOVEL MATCH.

A Cricket Match between the Upper Mitcham Early Rising Association *versus* Lower Mitcham Peep-o'-Day Club will be played on Lower Mitcham Green, on Wednesday Mornings, July 6th and 13th, 1870.

Wickets to be Pitched at 3.30 a.m. Play to commence at 4 precisely. Stumps to be drawn at 7 o'clock each Morning.

I have been told on good authority that postmen have formed such clubs in various counties, but I must acknowledge that the experience of seeing a match at

four o'clock in the morning is one which has yet to fall to my lot.

An interesting point which is often discussed is whether the good club cricketer is far removed from the county player. The general opinion seems to be that he is not, and that all he requires to enable him to make his mark in first-class matches is the necessary experience. It is probably in batting that first-rate club cricket most nearly approaches the standard of first-class cricket, and in fielding, especially ground fielding, that it falls farthest short. Good catches are brought off in all grades of the game, but it is in the best-class matches that pace and cleanness of pick-up are chiefly to be found. In many club teams the average age of the players is higher than that of any county side, and this fact must not be lost sight of, for it is astonishing how far away the ground can appear to be after one has passed his forty-fifth year.

There are also many men who, although having done wonderful things in club cricket, would never meet with much success in county games. A player may be a prodigy east of Suez, for instance, but a passenger in any first-class side in England. Such has been proved more than once. Inability to make their mark in the best company has been due in many cases to players forsaking the free methods which have brought them so many runs in club cricket. Maybe nervousness is partly responsible for such a change; at other times well-meant, though unfortunate, advice is the cause.

An instance of the latter occurred in the case of a young professional who, having averaged over one hundred for his club, was engaged on the county ground. In the few club-and-ground matches wherein he was tried he did as well as anyone could have hoped. He had, however, a weakness, which amounted to

genius, for getting straight and off balls round to leg, and, although he was occasionally out leg-before-wicket, his methods paid. Yet the coach considered that there was something "altogether wrong" in his cricket, and forthwith proceeded to mould his play on more orthodox lines. The result was that the young player lost his confidence, could make few runs, and for some seasons was a disappointment to himself and his friends. Then, however, he worked his way into the county side, but, although he occasionally brought off a dazzling stroke to leg from a ball outside the off stump, his play suffered much from the injudicious advice mentioned. Good judges declared that in some of his "unorthodox" strokes he might have rivalled Ranjitsinhji, but before they quite realized what was happening the damage had been done. Genius should not be confused with mere unorthodoxy, or steps be taken to "correct" it. As well might one attempt to paint the lily or perfume the violet.

In village cricket one may often find players who have become grizzled veterans. E. M. Grace played for sixty seasons, and probably enjoyed every moment of the time he was on the field of play. Charles Absolon, well known for the greater part of a century in Metropolitan cricket circles, obtained a hundred wickets during the year that he became an "octo-geranium"—as an admiring enthusiast once called him when making him a public presentation. In my own parish the eleven was led, and led well, to the end of 1906 by a man who had played his first match in 1837. He retired upon completing seventy years of cricket, "to make way for a younger cricketer," as he himself explained, and the decision almost broke his heart. In his first game of local importance he carried out his bat for forty-two, the only double-figure score of the

match, and the boy was bitterly disappointed because the parson made no reference to the feat in his sermon the next Sunday. To the last old F—— was a capital judge of cricket, always fully alive to any turn in the game, but apart from that he could be relied upon for little except to make a "duck" and pay for his lunch. His widow, when spoken to about old times, would say, "Ah! yes. We enjoyed sixty-two years of happy, wedded, cricket life." She was almost as devoted to the game as was her better half.

At the moment of writing I am far from first-class cricket, and the rain is descending in a torrent. On almost any other day of the year no disappointment would have been caused locally, but as I glance through the window I see that the cricket ground is a swamp and that the marquees are marooned in the watery waste. To-day there should have been a local "Derby" match against the next parish—a fixture dating back to the early days of last century—but not a ball will be bowled, and many a heart (young and otherwise) is heavy in consequence.

The parish clerk, recalling an incident of many years ago, suggested that, if the rain gave over, the fire-engine from the county town might be borrowed to pump the water from the pitch; but that was four hours ago, and everyone now recognizes that play to-day is out of the question. For years beyond the memory of the oldest inhabitant it has been customary to play this annual match for a new ball, the two squires in turn providing the trophy, which is always placed in the loving-cup which is handed round at the supper in the evening. This year we shall have the usual festive gathering, but the loss of the cricket is a keen regret to all, and many old villagers, including two in smock frocks, refuse to be comforted.

It is interesting to chat with some of these old worthies. Most of them have good memories, but—a circumstance I have noticed more than once—several of them lose count of the years. They will, for instance, tell you that when John Enticknap took all the ten wickets it was "the year Bill Burgess, the sweep, was drowned up at Shott Mills," and that the famous tie-match took place "exactly two days after Joe Nutter ran off with the postmaster's wife." It is all very quaint, and far more interesting than being told the exact month and year of the different events referred to. The mentality of these old countrymen is a curious thing, and can only be explained by the fact that they have always lived in a little world of their own, far from the railway, and that newspapers play a very small part indeed in their lives. "The coming of t'old Rector"—date unknown to the old men—coincided with George Jobson carrying his bat through the innings for 71 out of 89, and Charles Rawlings hit three sixes in an over the same week as "Dismal Jemmy's" water-butt burst and drowned his sow and litter. Certainly a day off from Lord's has its compensations, even if the rain descends in torrents.

It is, of course, a fact that practically all the favourite books on cricket have very little indeed to say respecting days ruined by rain. They never dwell on that matter, and a thoughtful foreigner, in reading the pages, would have reason for believing that the sun always shines at cricket matches. It is small comfort to a man who has travelled fifty miles to see a certain game only to find the ground under water, to be told: "Ah! it was even worse in 1821." The remark would be quite true, but it would fail in its good intention.

The number of private grounds is probably now larger than it was even twenty-five years ago, which is

a very good thing, although the middle-aged man will tell us that country-house cricket was at its best forty or fifty years ago—when, in fact, he, too, was in his prime. But distance always lends enchantment to the memories of one's youth, and surely no one will begrudge a veteran the happiness he derives from recollections of his early days.

The time was when a visit from the All England, the United or the United South Eleven was THE event of a season's cricket. Such matches were played at Enville Hall—the Earl of Stamford's seat—Southgate and elsewhere, whilst the chief amateurs of the day were often found at Moor Hall, Preston Hall and many another private ground. Very enjoyable the games were, too, for, although they lacked the grim seriousness attaching to modern first-class cricket, they were always contested keenly. Some of the old All England men, however, told me that it was the custom to allow the Earl mentioned to obtain a few runs, and whilst he was in to make flattering remarks on his play. "A fine ball that," the wicket-keeper would say. "And very well stopped," the bowler would add; and the Earl, who was batting, would never see that the remarks were made facetiously.

Perhaps the most amusing instance of a player being allowed to score concerned W. H. Trant, an Old Etonian, who, after a long absence in India on important Government duty, endeavoured to take to the game again upon his return. Eighty years or so ago he would practise at Eton, to the joy of the boys, being then an octogenarian. A pen-and-ink sketch, showing him on his way to the wicket, heavily padded, and with an umbrella and shawl, hangs on my study wall as I write.

Other men of such an advanced age have practised

batting, of course, but Trant took his cricket very seriously, and expected everyone to admire his performances. For some years he lived at Torquay, and when the All England Eleven had beaten the local Twenty-two, it was the old gentleman's custom to challenge two or three of the visiting side at single-wicket. Wisden, Jackson, Grundy and others would enter into the spirit of the thing, and with grave faces and many expressions of surprise and admiration, would let their own wicket down and allow their bowling to be scored from until the veteran had won. Strange to say, old Trant, who was a most intelligent man in other respects, never realized the harmless deception practised at his expense.

But it is not always an easy matter to allow a batsman, especially if a duffer, to make runs, for sometimes even a very bad ball will get a wicket, and accidents are always possible. There is an entertaining passage in one of the George Meredith letters which tells of a certain Royal game:

> . . . By the way, C—— told me that when Prins was at Curragh he came to the Viceregal Lodge, and played cricket. C—— warned all the opposition bowlers that Royal patronage of the manly game depended on Prins getting at least one run. Having missed, whilst fielding, two fine smack-into-the-hand catches, Wales goes in, and faces an unnamed, steady, determined Briton of a bowler, round, ruddy—an inevitable creature: one clearly selected by the gods to do this black business with the utmost satisfaction and comfort. Down went the wicket of your Prins at the first delivery of ball! To make matters worse, some wretches (not knowing that the wicket was a Royal one, or not feeling that the knocking of it over was rank treason to the Throne and to cricket) applauded lustily. Your Prins marched out with his bat amid the thunders.

Of course, "thunders" is Meredithian for cheers. Mr. Meredith, by the way, was an active cricketer in

his young days and famous for his fielding at point. During his latter years, when living at the foot of Box Hill, in Surrey, he often recalled to a kindred spirit the delights of the game and the pleasures he himself had derived from participation in it.

For a cricket tour to be ruined by the weather is always a disappointment, and often little less than a tragedy. In such circumstances it is generally only the landlord of the hotel which has been made the team's headquarters who benefits. One cricketer after completing a fortnight's tour told me that play was possible on only four days of the twelve, that he took no wickets and was not given a chance of scoring. That, I hope, was an exceptional case; otherwise the cricketer would soon come to be credited with as expressive a vocabulary as that of the golfer.

But, apart from the vagaries of the weather, holiday cricket is generally an unalloyed pleasure. Occasionally the manager of the side will be disappointed in not receiving the assistance of a player whose services he considered indispensable, and the excuse tendered for his absence may be so obviously an invention as to tempt one to take up a bat and smash things; but such occurrences are inseparable from holiday cricket, and must have been experienced by everyone who has attempted to run a cricket week. When inviting a player who is likely to decline, it is good policy to offer him plenty of opportunity to bowl. If he is a member of a first-class county side, and so used to seeing practically all the bowling done by professionals, he will be unable to refuse the bait, and the manager, instead of being told that "Mr. X much regrets he is unable to accept the kind invitation owing to the death of his grandmother," will possibly receive a wire boisterously announcing his willingness to play in

every match. And how delightful some country-house matches are; and how surprised many visiting teams are to find themselves outplayed from first to last by a side with the names of whose members they are unfamiliar! Some years ago, I remember, what was then regarded as the strongest local team in the London district went into Sussex to play on a private ground. The great majority of the visitors were well known to everyone who followed cricket at all closely, which certainly could not be said of the house party. Yet the latter ran up a score of 570 before declaring and had the game in hand from start to finish; which only goes to prove that there are far more good cricketers in the world than is commonly supposed.

One of the most enjoyable types of the game is Military cricket. The hospitality is unbounded always, the fielding keen, the play brisk, and a band is generally in attendance in the afternoon. The ladies of the garrison, too, appear in their brightest frocks, and their presence is always most welcome. Was it not the late Mr. Gerald Bardswell, of Lancashire, who said that a cricket match without ladies was like lamb without mint-sauce? Very many of them understand the finer points of the game quite as well as the men do, and when it is necessary to explain some occurrence or custom the man to whose lot the task falls should consider himself fortunate. It is, of course, only in the columns of the professedly comic papers that a member of the fair sex has to be informed that in the Eton *v.* Harrow match the Headmasters do not share the umpiring duties, and that the bowling screens are not erected to keep the draught off the ball.

Many things happen in minor cricket to which first-class matches furnish no parallels. For instance, the cause of a batsman's voluntary retirement from a village

game may not always be immediately evident. It may result from a hastily delivered message received at the wicket, in which case the spectators' curiosity may, or may not, eventually be satisfied. Thus, at Crayford, in Kent, in October 1788, a member of the team was summoned home in great urgency to find that another cricketer had been born into the world. The new arrival was John Sherman, for long well known as a good player in the Manchester district. He was uncle of Tom Sherman, Surrey's fast bowler of the long ago, and died in August 1861, aged seventy-two.

Many years ago I had a curious experience whilst playing in a village match in Kent. The first ball of an over had just been bowled when a young girl, in a state of great excitement, rushed up to the umpire at my end—I was the non-striker—said something to him, and retired as quickly as she had arrived. The umpire was a rare stickler for trifles, and *it was not until the over had been completed*, my partner receiving all the remaining four balls, that we were allowed to know the import of the message. The over finished, the umpire walked a yard or two down the pitch and addressed the striker thus—he was always a civil and respectful man: "I beg your pardon, Mr. Bentley, sir, but I'm sorry to say as 'ow your house be on fire!"

It was perfectly true, and I have never seen a stout, middle-aged man cover ground so rapidly as my partner did then.

The score-sheet recorded: "T. Bentley, retired, 12," which, in the circumstances, seemed quite prosaic. The fire did damage to the extent of three or four hundred pounds, but what annoyed the batsman most was that he was called away at such a moment, for, as he himself said, "I really believe I should have made at least twenty." It sounds somewhat quaint now, but

forty years or so ago runs took some getting on village greens, especially when water was not laid on and proper pitches could not be prepared.

It must be well within the recollection of many not advanced far in middle age when the average village pitch was one on which a three-figure score by a side was an event of the rarest occurrence. Not infrequently, in fact, forty wickets would fall in the course of an afternoon. Eloquent testimony to the nature of a country wicket was once given by a well-known Nottinghamshire player, who, asked what happened in a whole-day match between two neighbouring villages in his county, replied:

> First they went in and we went in, and they went in and we went in, and they won. Then we went in and they went in, and we went in and they went in, and we won. Then they went in and we went in, and they went in and we went in, and they won—and then 'twasn't dark!

This may be a slight exaggeration, but certain it is that the condition of some grounds was such that only a civil engineer could do justice to it.

Early in the present century the *Pall Mall Gazette* published a very amusing article on "Yokels at Cricket," wherein the writer described his experiences on a pitch where the blocks were too large to begin with and too numerous; where all that could be said of the fielding was that the men in the lost-ball region did their ferreting well, and where the fast ball shot, rose five feet and shot again. Sometimes, he added pathetically, the five-feet rise came last. Such a description suggests that it would be interesting to see the form of the Surrey Eleven on Epsom Downs.

And yet, despite the hard knocks which they frequently sustained on rural wickets, our fathers and

grandfathers probably enjoyed their village cricket as much as does any one of us to-day. Such games warmed the heart of Miss Mitford, who wrote:

> A village match is the thing, where our highest officer—our conductor (to borrow a musical term)—is but a little farmer's second son; where a day labourer is our bowler and a blacksmith our long-stop; where the spectators consist of the retired cricketers, the veterans of the green, the careful mothers, the girls, and all the boys of two parishes, together with a few amateurs, little above them in rank, and not at all in pretension; where laughing and shouting, and the very ecstasy of merriment and good humour prevail—such a match, in short, as I attended yesterday, at the expense of getting twice wet through, and as I would attend to-morrow, at the certainty of having that ducking doubled.

In some respects the same remarks would apply with truth to many inter-village games of to-day; but now play is undoubtedly better than it was when the above was penned, and it is no longer the general custom to play "for honour and a supper, glory and half-a-crown a man."

Many quaint things occurred, especially during the war, in connection with village cricket of which the outer world heard little or nothing. There was, for instance, a curious and surprising revival of the game in my own parish in 1916. One of my duties and pleasures respecting the conduct of the small community's affairs was to superintend the business of the Working Men's Slate Club. The meetings were held in the Institute, on one of the walls of which, enclosed in a glass case, was an old Challenge Cup, formerly competed for by the villages within a radius of about fifteen miles. Twice it was won outright by our team and restored, but, upon becoming their own property for the third time, was retained, it being considered

that such a feat was deserving of permanent commemoration.

During a lull in the proceedings at one of the Slate Club meetings I referred casually to the old competition matches, and immediately the whole atmosphere became changed. The stewards, who had become lethargic, threw off the comatose condition and prattled gaily about old successes; members who dropped in to pay their dues became infected, and the climax was reached when a veteran of sixty-three (whose hands were so gouty that one could easily have chalked a billiard-cue on his knuckles) solemnly declared: "Oi believe Oi could bat as well as ever now, but my legs ain't quite wot they wos."

The statement produced an impressive silence—for the speaker was the last person one would take to be a cricketer, being of great bulk, tottery and turning the scale at over eighteen stone—and before the effect wore off I asked, "Why should not the members of this Club form a cricket club among themselves? You are all middle-aged, so there would probably be no one of very outstanding merit among you." Instantly a dozen pipes were taken solemnly from a dozen mouths, and a dozen pairs of eyes—eleven and a half pairs really, for the man who drives the baker's cart had lost an eye three years before when a passing horse cast a shoe, since when he has worn a black hood, which can be seen a mile off—a dozen pairs of eyes, I say, were fixed upon me, with expressions half wistful, half hopeful, and then, as though not quite sure of his ground (for he spoke in hesitating tones), an old labourer observed, "I begs to second that." Others present supported the idea, and there and then it was decided to indulge in some preliminary practice a few evenings later. The old men especially were very

enthusiastic, and one who had been drawing sick pay for three weeks was so energetic as to gain congratulations from his fellow members on his sudden recovery.

At length the great day arrived, and the players duly appeared garbed in raiment of such various hues that the spectacle they presented would have caused quite a sensation, if not consternation, at Lord's. Many still possessed their flannels, but were content to use their everyday trousers, for, as more than one told me in confidence, "My cricket things have shrunk round the waist," and they formed little groups discussing the strange phenomenon. I fear their enjoyment was marred somewhat by the presence of about two hundred of Kitchener's Army, for they had not reckoned upon publicity, and because the Parson, who had not known of the revived interest in the game, returned unexpectedly from a short holiday and witnessed (to his unconcealed astonishment) the antics of several of the most sober-minded among the more elderly of his flock.

It very soon became evident that those who took part in the practice had lost much of their former skill. Their spirit was willing, but their legs seemed older than their bodies. They were, for the most part, quaint old men, whose doings would have rejoiced the heart of W. W. Jacobs. Much of the batting was of the style in which men fell trees, and all the bowling was underhand, some of it so short that it would have been a good length if delivered from the other end. One of the old fellows was the exact counterpart of a character described by the late Fred Gale as "a man over fifty years of age, and a rare good underhand bowler or trundler, and when he played a match he put on his Sunday trousers, which were of drab cloth, with a square piece of black in the seat of them, and

part of the back view of him represented the stern windows of a frigate."

Some of the veterans took the practice very seriously, and one, who opened the innings, was most precise as to the value of the different boundary hits. His inquiries caused one or two of the fielding side to become somewhat impatient and to indulge in harmless chaff at his expense; but it was keenness, not love of show or publicity, which prompted his questions, and I was sorry when, quite by accident, the first ball was straight shot and bowled him. A friendly umpire, however —the man with one eye—declared it was a trial ball, so the old man was allowed to remain in, and he stayed until he had scored seven, when he trod on his wicket in playing back. A retired carpenter seemed to be the most scientific bowler, at least so far as appearances went, for he had short, bristling white whiskers and a fierce eye, and, when about to deliver the ball, regarded the batsman ferociously and apparently took most careful and deliberate aim at him. Truth compels me to admit that Fortune was not kind to him and that his analysis was not a thing of beauty. To be frank, his bowling proved more useful to his opponents than to his own side; but as he supplied the ball—a war-worn relic, unearthed from only he knew where—it was felt that it would be ungracious to suggest that a change was desirable. So he kept on until at last compelled to desist, in the middle of an over, for, to use his own expression, "Blowed if my last brace button ain't comed off!" So he retired—to the tent—and criticized, perhaps not too kindly, the endeavours of his successors.

My old friends frequently proved that they had become fastidious with the passing years. One, who had batted for twenty-five minutes for a single (made off his right thumb), upon being bowled by a ball

which hugged the ground the whole way, gravely deplored the lack of a bowling screen, and another, upon returning to a bench after playing the shortest innings on record—he was run out off the first ball delivered whilst he was in—observed to a companion: "I miss the old windmill, Ned." "Aye," was the reply; "there always was a comfortable look about it." Notwithstanding their curious remarks, one and all really understood the game, but I noticed that those who did least seemed to be the most prone to criticize.

Like all good things, the practice came at last to an end. It finished abruptly through the ball rolling on to the road—the result of an overthrow, not of a hit—and being crushed by a traction engine, just as an old gardener, aged sixty-one, who had made a couple of singles, was "set for his hundred." It was a great day, and one still frequently recalled. Practically every parishioner was present except the shoemaker, who was too busy to leave his shop. "Having to stay here whilst cricket is going on," he confided to the Vicar's daughter, "is what I calls perjury, Miss Phyll."

A few nights later there was a fuller attendance than usual at the weekly meeting of the Slate Club. For some evenings, as the result of having exercised muscles not generally employed, the remark, "Oh! how I *do* ache!" was heard in almost every part of the village; but at the gathering mentioned the unanimous verdict was that the practice game had been an enjoyable success, and the hope was expressed that, perhaps by August, they would have improved sufficiently to be prepared to play—and to "make a day of it"—against any similarly aged team within a radius of fifteen miles.

Everything, in fact, promised well for the success of the veterans' club. But one thing caused them some uneasiness—the attitude of the Parson respecting their escapade. On that point their conscience was not quite easy, for they remembered the good man's look of astonishment as he saw them exercising their limbs and displaying their art on the village green, and the more susceptible of their number professed to have noticed that, at morning service the next Sunday, he put unusual emphasis on the words, "We have done those things we ought not to have done." But, on the other hand, it was recalled that the new curate in preaching his first sermon—it was at the same service—mentioned cricket appreciatively, and that (as Mr. Mackintosh, the chief supporter of the game in the district, observed) was a good omen. Afterwards the sermon was discussed on the pitch, and the old postman remarked, "He has a beautiful delivery, sir." "Yes," I replied, "and he keeps a good length." It was not a new joke, save perhaps to him, but it evidently gave pleasure, for the old man hobbled away chuckling, at which I was glad, for he was one of those whose too sensitive conscience had made him feel that perhaps the Vicar was not in sympathy with their rejuvenescence.

It would take too long to deal in detail with the subsequent adventures of those quaint, dear old friends. Suffice it to say that, feeling they were helping to "carry-on" whilst their sons and, in a few instances, grandsons were playing a sterner game, they "kept the ball rolling," though at irregular intervals, until it was found possible to resume more serious cricket in 1919. Then they abandoned their activities, but, wishing to meet occasionally as a body, formed themselves into a Music Society. Their vocal efforts are generally in

evidence between the innings, and when the village band also puts in an appearance quite a holiday atmosphere is created.

"Cricket and music!" The associations of the words must inspire many players with most happy recollections. What can possibly be more conducive to unalloyed pleasure than a match at the country house of a friend followed by dinner and an impromptu concert? Should anyone doubt it, he is recommended to read the Hon. Edward Lyttelton's article in which the *modus operandi* of the Free Foresters' famous quartette is set forth and justice is done to the memory of Tom Ratcliff, the most genial of men. To have been present at those gatherings must have been "very Heaven": good cricket, good fellowship, good music —what more could one possibly desire? I have often thought how different were the proceedings which followed an old-time village match. If one refers to an early volume of *Bell's Life*, one can repeatedly find some such statement as: "After the game the rival parties adjourned to the Mare's Nest Inn, where they partook of leg of mutton with trimmings and passed the rest of the evening with the utmost conviviality." Good cheer, doubtless, and good fellowship; but what of the music? Only once was I present at such a gathering, and the chief memory of the event is that, on his own proposition, one of the players sang a professedly humorous song entitled "The Lost Lady Found"—a parody of "The Lost Chord" —and that all his companions listened in stolid silence throughout the twenty-three verses and then adjourned.

Those must have been good days when little Hambledon could beat England and, after the winning hit had been made, some of the chief village players would

entertain their companions with song at an informal gathering to celebrate the event. From what one can gather, the old Hambledon team must have been a veritable nest of singing-birds. More than once Tom Sueter must have knocked England's best bowling all over Broad-Halfpenny on a Saturday and have sung a solo in Hambledon Church the next morning. Great days, truly! But one cannot easily imagine "that anointed clod-stumper," Tom Walker, joining in a chorus: his batting was slow, he "toiled like a tar on horseback," and if he had ventured to break into song would probably have been a few bars behind. Besides, did not the Rev. John Mitford say that his grunt was like the bellow of a broken-winded horse "only of a deeper bass"? One fears that Tom, good cricketer though he was, did not have music in his soul. It was of a Hambledonian—the illustrious John Small, the elder—that the story was told that, being chased in a large field by an infuriated bull, he calmed the animal's wrath by playing his violin—how fortunate he had it with him! —and, gradually backing towards a stile during the performance, at length reached safety without sustaining hurt.

Cricket and music are perhaps the two most delightful of human enjoyments, and one who loves both is in a quandary when treated to the two at one time. With wickets having reached such a degree of perfection (from the batsman's point of view), music during play may perhaps be excused, for the strains of a band are more likely to embarrass a batsman than a bowler, for the former, if musical, is likely to keep step to the tune, walk out of his ground, and be stumped for what the amiable Felix, of Kent, was pleased to call a semibreve. It was, it may be recalled, Felix who, whilst seated in the orchestra at Canterbury with the music score in front

of him, was interrupted in his meditations by old William Lillywhite leaning over his shoulder and sagely observing: "Ah! Muster Falix, with all those queer notes in your head you're sure to give away an overthrow or two to-morrow!"

CHAPTER XIV

"THE GENTLEST ART" [1]

A Boer General Proposes to Relieve the Tedium of the Siege of Mafeking.

Commandant Eloff to Colonel R. S. S. Baden-Powell.

Outside Mafeking,
April 29, 1900.

Dear Sir,—I see in the *Bulawayo Chronicle* that your men in Mafeking play cricket on Sundays, and gave concerts and balls on Sunday evenings. In case you will allow my men to join in, it would be very agreeable to me, as here, outside Mafeking, there are seldom any of the fair sex, and there can be no merriment without them being present. In case you would allow this we could spend some of the Sundays, which we still have to get through round Mafeking, and of which there will probably be several, in friendship and unity. During the coming course of the week you can let us know if you accept my proposition, and I shall then, with my men, be on the cricket field, and at the ball-room at the time so appointed by you. Wishing you and yours a pleasant day,

I remain,
Your obedient friend,
S. Eloff.
Commandant Jobsdal Commando.

[1] See also letter from the Hon. R. Grimston to Mr. F. Gale on page 148.

Colonel R. S. S. Baden-Powell to Commandant Eloff.[1]

MAFEKING,
April 30, 1900.

SIR,—I beg to thank you for your letter of yesterday, in which you propose that your men should come and play cricket with us. I should like nothing better—after the match in which we are at present engaged is over. But just now we are having our innings, and have so far scored 200 days not out against the bowling of Cronje, Snyman, Botha and Eloff, and we are having a very enjoyable game.

I remain,
Yours truly,
R. S. S. BADEN-POWELL.

DR. E. M. GRACE TELLS HOW IT WAS DONE.

PARK HOUSE, THORNBURY,
July 22, 1902.

F. A. Leeston-Smith and F. L. Cole came in together for Weston-super-Mare. It was then five balls to an over. Cole made one off my first ball, Leeston-Smith six off second, six off third, six off fourth, six off fifth, when the umpire said, "I am afraid it is over, Doctor." I said, "Shut up! I am going to have another"; and off this one he was stumped. Weston-super-Mare had to follow their innings. Leeston-Smith came in first. The first ball I bowled to him he hit for six, the second for six; but off the third he was stumped again. They do not always make sixes. Against Gloucester last Thursday I went on to bowl, sending down four maiden overs running and then taking myself off.

[1] In a letter to me dated May 23, 1927, General Baden-Powell wrote: "When I was in Johannesburg this last winter we had a dinner of the Defenders of Mafeking and the Relief Force, and our Boer Besiegers were invited to it. I sat next to Commandant Eloff, and he reminded me of our correspondence on the cricket question."

"Felix's" Last Match.

A note written in pencil by the old Kent cricketer on page 576 of vol. iv of "Scores and Biographies."

Farewell! farewell!

May 20, 1857.

After this match I was most kindly admonished by Almighty God, being struck down by paralysis when in the enjoyment of good health.

N. Felix.

[The game referred to was Horsham *v.* West Grinstead, on Jobsfield Common, May 24, 1854, in which, in his one innings, he scored 31. Probably the note should have been attached to the Horsham *v.* Ifield match, on the former's ground, on July 14th the same year.]

An Invalid's Interest.

"Felix" to the Hon. Frederick Ponsonby (Earl of Bessborough).

20, Montpelier Street, Brighton,
December 28, 1865.

My Dear Friend, . . . It is now ten years since I have seen any cricket save what is played by a few small boys of the ragged school, who "do congregate" on ground close at hand, which I suppose was once a field of beautiful green, but now the recipient of materials for building purposes. Poor little fellows! their cricket ground will soon become part of this immense town, and I shall lose the pleasure of an occasional smile, for, rough as it is, their anxiety to excel is quite as keen as when our hearts used to beat high for honour and renown. I often hobble up that way and stop to let fancy have its playful sway. The past

is like a happy dream, the present challenges the past for enjoyment of a peace of mind scarcely known to the gladsome hours of youth, and the future gives to me now a calm contemplation almost as heedlessly dwelt upon by joyous boyhood.

The wickets of these little fellows are chiefly composed of three pieces of broken stone piled one upon the other, and when not high enough receive the complementary aid of a folded jacket and cap, peculiar to the young Arab.

Mrs. Mary Turner, of East Hoathly, sends News to her Son Phillip, at Brighthelmstone.

. . . Last Munday youre Father was at Mr. Payn's and plaid at Cricket and came home please anuf for he struck the best ball in the Game, and whishd he had not anny thing else to do he would play at Cricket all his Life.

The Duke of Cumberland ("Butcher") Chooses Unwisely.

Robert Ord, Chief Baron of the Exchequer in Scotland, to the 4th Earl of Carlisle.

Petersham,
August 13, 1751.

You see in the papers that Lord Sandwich has won his match at cricket against the Duke, but what I think the best part of the story is not told there. The Duke, to procure good players on his side, ordered twenty-two who were reckoned the best players in the country to be brought to play before him, in order for him to choose eleven out of them. They played accordingly, and

he chose eleven. The other eleven being affronted at the choice, challenged the elect to play for a crown a head out of their own pockets. The challenge was accepted; they played before the Duke, and the elect were beat all to nothing.

THE POINT OF VIEW. A PROTEST AND THE REPLY.

From the L.C.C. to the Quartermaster-General, Horse Guards.

November, 1914.

"I have to inform you that I have received a report to the effect that this morning a company of the Royal Field Artillery, stationed at Woolwich, drove all over Blackheath and damaged the cricket pitches despite the protests of the Council's keepers. I feel sure that it is only necessary to bring the matter to your notice to prevent any further similar occurrence."

The reply made by the Major of the Battery concerned was:

"If the London County Council consider the upkeep of cricket and football grounds of paramount importance and the training of troops merely a secondary consideration, I have nothing to say except that my Battery has had at least one opportunity of carrying out an important part of its training."

A "PUBLIC" SCHOOL CHALLENGE.

THE SCHOOLS, SHREWSBURY,
February 27, 1866.

DEAR SIR,—I write to ask if a match between Westminster and Shrewsbury can be arranged for this

season? The most convenient date for us would be any day in the week beginning June 17th. We shall be happy to play on any ground in London which you may select.

Yours, etc.,
J. SPENCER PHILLIPS, *Capt.*

To the Captain of the Westminster Eleven.

WESTMINSTER,
March 5, 1866.

SIR,—The Captain of the Westminster Eleven is sorry to disappoint Shrewsbury, but Westminster plays no schools except Public Schools,[1] and the general feeling in the school quite coincides with that of the committee of the Public Schools Club, who issue this list of public schools—Charterhouse, Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Westminster, and Winchester.

Yours truly,
E. OLIVER, *Capt.*

To the Captain of the Shrewsbury Eleven.

THE SCHOOLS, SHREWSBURY,
March 9, 1866.

SIR,—I cannot allow your answer to my first letter to pass without some notice. I have only to say that a school, which we have Camden's authority for stating was the most important school in England at a time when Westminster was unknown, which Her Majesty

[1] In 1846 Westminster had declined to meet King's College, London, on the same ground.

has included in the list of public schools by the Royal Commission, and which, according to the report of the Commissioners, is more distinctly *public* than any other school, cannot be deprived of its rights as a public school, either by the assertions of a Westminster boy, or by the dictum of the self-styled Public Schools Club. I regret to find from your letter that the captain of the Westminster Eleven has yet to learn the first lesson of a true public school education, the behaviour due from one gentleman to another.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
J. SPENCER PHILLIPS.

To the Captain of the Westminster Eleven.

"W. G." POINTS THE WAY.

MOTTINGHAM, ELTHAM, KENT,
August 25, 1914.

To the Editor of *The Sportsman*.

SIR,—There are many cricketers who are already doing their duty, but there are many more who do not seem to realize that in all probability they will have to serve either at home or abroad before the war is brought to a conclusion. The fighting on the Continent is very severe, and will probably be prolonged. I think the time has arrived when the county cricket season should be closed, for it is not fitting at a time like the present that able-bodied men should play day after day and pleasure-seekers look on. There are so many who are young and able, and yet are hanging back. I should like to see all first-class cricketers of suitable

age, etc., set a good example, and come to the help of their country without delay in its hour of need.

Yours, etc.,

W. G. Grace.

Lord Hawke Receives a Suggestion.

Bay View, Scarborough,
September 1, 1906.

My Lord,—I trust you will forgive the liberty I take in addressing you, but hearing that there is likely to be a vacancy in the Gentlemen of England XI, I trust you will not think me obtrusive if I venture to inform you that should you have any difficulty in supplying the vacancy, I shall be glad to step into the breach. I have played all the season for Cricklewood C.C., and have been consistently successful. In eight matches (two whole-day) I have totalled 140 runs, and have been twice not out. I am a slow leg-break bowler, and when supported by a capable field I am confident I should obtain wickets, only, alas! at Cricklewood the fielding does not occupy so large a place in the players' admiration as the more showy arts of batting and bowling. I am a good field myself, though an injury to my left leg and a certain stiffness in my right arm rather handicap my run-saving powers.

As for my social qualifications to play for the Gentlemen of England, you need have no fear, but I may mention that I am on most friendly terms with several of the Essex amateurs, though unfortunately I have not the pleasure of Mr. Fane's acquaintance.

Believe me, my Lord,
Your obedient servant,

Jas. Billberry.

THE VILLAGE BELLE GIVES A HINT TO A JOURNEYMAN BLACKSMITH.

FOR MISTUR JEM BROWNE
BLAXMITH BY
S.

Mistur browne this is to Inform you that oure parish plays bramley men next monday is a week, i think we shall lose without yew. from your humbell servant to command

MARY ALLEN.

WHY THE MATCH WAS POSTPONED.

————, AUSTRALIA,
————, 1899.

DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to have to inform you that it is impossible for us to meet your club on Saturday. Our cricket ground is situated on a gold-field reserve, and a rush took place on it last week. Our ground was pegged out, and is being sunk upon, so that it is totally unfit to play upon. Apologizing, etc.

"ALL THE . . . WOMEN MERELY PLAYERS."

Gilbert White to Samuel Barker.

SELEBURNE,
August 1, 1786.

Little Tom Clement is visiting at Petersfield, where he plays much at Cricket: Tom bats, his grandmother bowls, and his great-grandmother watches out!!

MISS MARY RUSSELL MITFORD DOES NOT APPROVE.

To R. B. HAYDON, Esq., Paddington Green.

THREE MILE CROSS,
August 24, 1823.

Pray, are you a cricketer? We are very great ones —I mean our parish, of which we, the feminine members, act audience, and "though we do not play, o'erlook" the balls. When I wrote to you last I was just going to see a grand match in a fine old park near us, Bramshill, between Hampshire, with Mr. Budd, and All England. I anticipated great pleasure from so grand an exhibition, and thought, like a simpleton, the better the play the more the enjoyment. Oh, what a mistake! There they were—a set of ugly old men, whiteheaded and baldheaded (for half of Lord's was engaged in the combat, players and gentlemen, Mr. Ward and Lord Frederick, the veterans of the green) dressed in tight white jackets (the Apollo Belvidere could not bear the hideous disguise of a cricketing jacket), with neckcloths primly tied round their throats, fine japanned shoes, silk stockings and gloves, instead of our fine village lads, with their unbuttoned collars, their loose waistcoats, and the large shirt-sleeves which give an air so picturesque and Italian to their glowing, bounding youthfulness: there they stood, railed in by themselves, silent, solemn, slow—playing for money, making a business of the thing, grave as judges, taciturn as chess players—a sort of dancers without music, instead of the glee, the fun, the shouts, the laughter, the glorious confusion of the country game. And there were we, the lookers-on, in tents and marquees, fine and freezing, dull as the players, cold as this hard summer weather, shivering and yawning and trying to seem pleased, the curse of gentility on all our doings, as stupid as we

could have been in a ball-room. I never was so disappointed in my life. But everything is spoilt when money puts its ugly nose in. To think of playing cricket for hard cash! Money and gentility would ruin any pastime under the sun. Much to my comfort (for the degrading my favourite sport into a "science," as they were pleased to call it, had made me quite spiteful) the game ended unsatisfactorily to all parties, winners and losers. Old Lord Frederick, on some real or imaginary affront, took himself off in the middle of the second innings, so that the two last were played without him, by which means his side lost, and the other could scarcely be said to win. So be it always when men make the noble game of cricket an affair of bettings and hedgings, and, may be, of cheatings.

An Inter-County Chaffing Match.

The Lancashire C.C.C. to the Nottinghamshire C.C.C.
Christmas, 1883.

Cricketing Rules

Drawn up by the

Notts County Cricket Club, 1883–4.

Rule 1.—That in playing Lancashire the Lancashire men shall not be allowed to use bats but only broom-handles.

Rule 2.—That Lancashire shall not be allowed any bowlers, and if so no stumps to be used; and the Notts captain to select the bowler.

Rule 3.—That both umpires shall be strictly Notts men.

Rule 4.—That in case there is any fear that Notts should lose, even under these rules, the Notts men do leave the field and refuse to finish the game.

The Nottinghamshire C.C.C. to the Lancashire C.C.C.

New Year, 1884.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY CRICKET.

The only rules necessary for players in the County Eleven are that they shall neither have been born in, nor reside in, Lancashire.

Sutton-in-Ashfield men will have the preference.

In order to appreciate the above, it is necessary to recall that Middlesex and Notts, in 1883 and 1884 respectively, declined to arrange matches with Lancashire owing to the unfair bowling of Crossland and Nash. The crusade against throwing was prosecuted vigorously, chiefly in behalf of Kent, by Lord Harris. The result was that Nash dropped out of Lancashire cricket in 1885 and Crossland, a Notts man by birth, was found to be not properly qualified.

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